SHADOWRUN

SPLINTERED STATE

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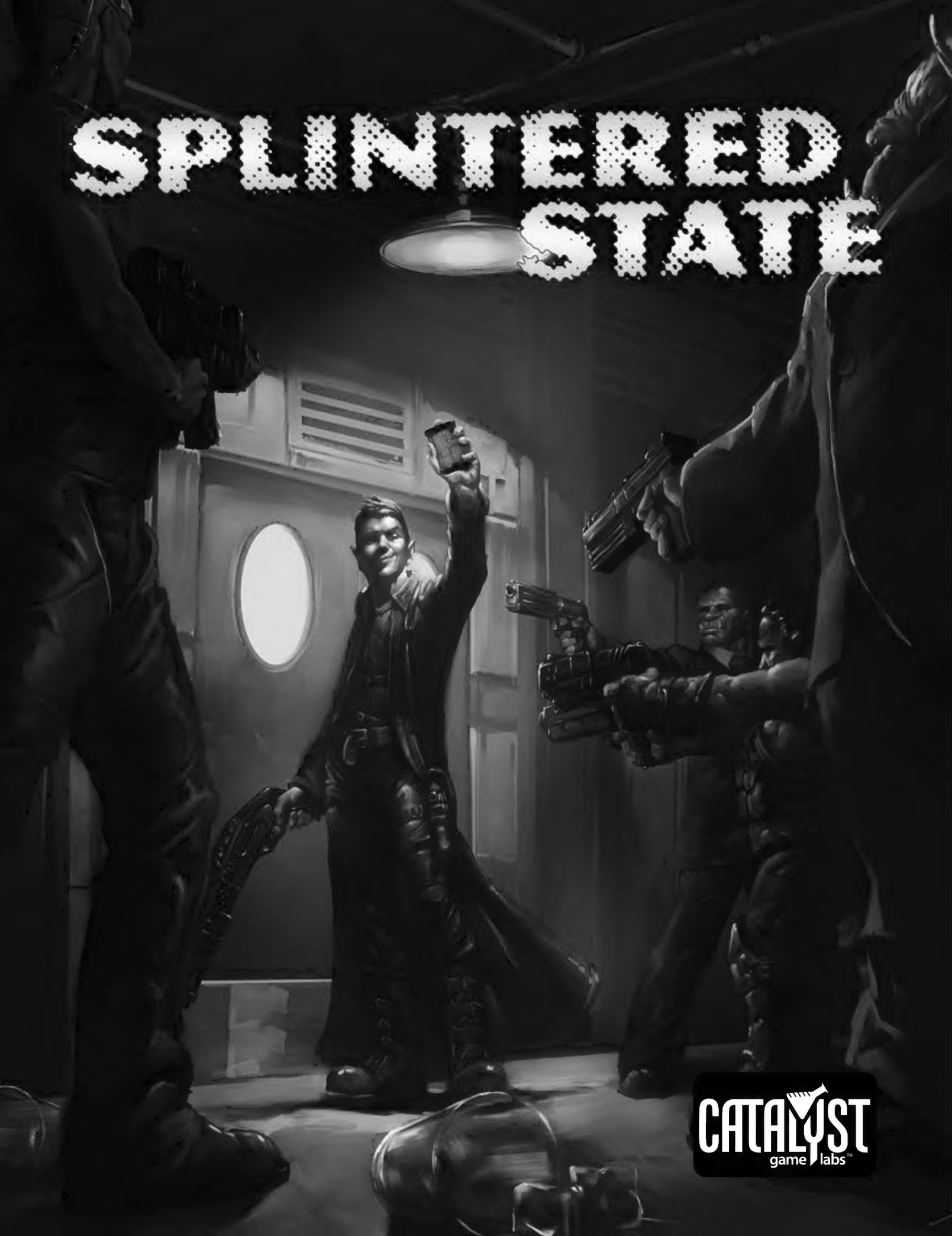
A SIXTH WORLD ADVENTURE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EVERYONE WANTS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

BLINK

FBI Agent Seth Dietrich had seen plenty of danger or strangeness in his days, but regaining consciousness in free-fall was a new one even for him. The first thing he registered was the stomach-lurching phenomenon of falling, body twisting around in mid-air. He saw his arms and legs stretched out and up before him, flailing. The last thing he remembered was a total non sequitur, a flatvid movie slam-cut, abrupt and jarring.

Then the floor broke the fall and his fall broke the floor. Multiple layers of flimsy and rotting wooden scaffolding broke apart beneath him. When he finally stopped falling, a wildly dancing galaxy of asbestos dust swirled above him, and his entire body throbbed from the impact. Above him, he heard gunfire and incoherent shouts. The throbbing pain in his body and the faintness in his head made him want to just lie there, but sometimes to keep living, you have to get off the ground.

He rolled to his feet with difficulty, staggering, and looked up through ten stories of smashed flooring that cored the central tower of an abandoned Barrens death trap of an apartment building. Frightened squatters scrambled for cover or stared at him in surprise, their auras striped yellow and green with swirling eddies of fear and curiosity. Wait? Auras? Since when could he see auras? That was when he realized his head was swimming with the effects of an unfamiliar drug he couldn't remember taking, that he'd never have taken. Why was he on tempo?

Add to this question a plethora of others: how had he gotten to the Barrens when he'd been lying low at a safe house in Snohomish a few hours ago? Or was it more than a few hours? Why was it night when it had been early afternoon last time he opened his eyes? Who were these men shooting at him? No answers were forthcoming, largely because of the shabbily dressed men and orks scrambling down what was left of the stairwell toward him, firing potshots with Streetline Specials and AK-97 assault rifles, their grips wrapped with duct tape.

Bullets chewed into the moldy flooring and peeling, decades-old wallpaper around him, phosphorous tracers cutting through the dim and dusty air. He thrust a hand into the pocket of his lined coat. The familiar weight of his Colt Government 2066 was missing, and there was a Steyr TMP in its place, along with the cold glass of some kind of vial. His Transys Avalon was still on him, thankfully.

He spun out from under and behind the gnarled wooden support he'd taken cover behind and fired a burst of flechette rounds upwards, his sights riding the recoil from one silhouette to the next. A cry of pain and a loud crash told him he'd gotten a piece of someone, but a volley of answering fire sent him sprinting down the corridor, looking for a way out.

"You think you can cut-and-run on the 88s, you stupid motherfucker!" a voice called out after him, screaming harshly above the chattering guns. "You're a dead man!"

Those weren't Brackhaven's men, coming to kill him for knowing too much. So who were they?

Triads? Why had he been meeting with Triads, let alone stealing from them? Dietrich felt hot blood soaking his sleeve from a hole in his shoulder as he shoved aside a catatonic looking BTL-head and made for the boarded-up window at the end of the hallway. Not looking back as his legs pumped under him, he sprayed bullets into either side of the boards, sending some of them scattering across the floor. In the faint streetlight leaking through the newly made gaps, he could make out the spidery metal silhouette of a rusting fire escape, exactly what he was looking for.

The only thing that made sense to him was the impossible. Someone had hijacked his body and taken it for a joy ride, ditching it at the worst possible moment. Whoever it was had a hell of a lot of explaining to do, but first he had to get out of the Barrens alive. Hearing the goons rounding the corner behind him, at a dead run, he threw himself at the window, flying toward the fire escape beyond.

BLINK

POLITICS & PAYDATA

Splintered State is an introductory adventure for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, which means that if you're looking for a first adventure to run so that players and the gamemaster can learn the system and earn that first precious bit of Karma, this is where to look.

Splintered State is an adaptable adventure, one gamemasters can easily adjust to suit the skills of their team, from novice to seasoned pro. It centers on a commlink with some very valuable information and the various factions interested in getting their hands on it. The players' action will determine how the factions react to them, how much cash they might be able to get in exchange for the information they have, and, most importantly, whether they are able to get out of this whole situation alive.

Players should stop reading now. The rest of *Splintered State* is for gamemasters only. It lays out the plots, characters, and secrets the gamemaster will use in creating the group's adventure. Reading beyond this point could spoil a player's experience and diminish enjoyment of the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Brackhaven family, financially backed by Brackhaven Investments and intricately linked to the Humanis ~~hate group~~ policlub, has controlled Seattle politically through its scion Kenneth Brackhaven for the past five years. A jingoist, archconservative metaracist, Seattle metroplex governor Kenneth Brackhaven has made more than his fair share of enemies in those five years, a list that includes political opponents, metahuman rights activists, Ork Underground community organizers, human beings with morals, and so on. Events brewing around the controversial governor finally came to a head in the fall of last year, 2074, when Proposition 23, a proposal to legalize and legitimize Seattle's (in)famous Ork Underground, finally went to a vote and passed, legitimizing a formerly crime-ridden and fringe area.

Brackhaven rebounded from a failed presidential race in 2057 to lie, cheat, steal, and intimidate his way to election as Seattle's governor. In spite of his unpopularity with many of Seattle's more progressive voters, he remained a savvy political operator invaluable to the corporate sponsors who wield the city's real power. In 2074, with Prop 23 passing, that invulnerability was finally challenged. Brackhaven's failure to quash Prop 23 landed him in hot water with his conservative base and his corporate patrons. Worse still, Brackhaven was publicly implicated in a humiliating scandal over the alleged solution he had planned to crush Prop 23: Operation Daybreak.

Daybreak was a never-executed plan aimed at preventing the passing of Proposition 23 by highly illegal means. It was designed to "highlight the dangers of the Ork Underground" by hiring shadow operatives to frame Underground community leaders for various crimes. According to the plan, this would publicly justify later occupying the Underground with armed forces, eliminating those leaders and increasing the public level of fear and hatred of the Ork Underground in the process. This was intended to bolster public admiration of the Seattle government and their success in dealing with the "criminal ork element." The Project Daybreak allegations were never proven, nor was Brackhaven ever formally charged, because the evidence, and the man who had been gathering it (FBI Special Agent Seth Dietrich) disappeared.

While Brackhaven retained the governorship in the 2074 election, handily defeating his opponents, his approval numbers are below fifty percent for the first time since his election in 2070, and many perceive him as being on the ropes. Things got even more serious for Brackhaven and his people when shortly after the election, the governor was subpoenaed by the FBI for major financial misconduct.

Perhaps the one person most directly responsible for Brackhaven's current woes, from unearthing the plans for Operation Daybreak to linking Brackhaven to alleged corporate fraud, is Special Agent Seth Dietrich. An honorable agent and FBI golden boy, Dietrich is known to be beyond corruption and to serve no corporate masters. Dietrich's diligence in investigating Brackhaven resulted in the governor's press secretary, Edmund Jeffries, being arraigned before a grand jury on charges of murder and prosecuted by Seattle District Attorney Dana Oaks for multiple counts of fraud, conspiracy, and murder. And it was his close cooperation with Seattle's shadow community that dug up the secret plans for Operation Daybreak, plans that could be connected back to Brackhaven.

There is, as there always seems to be, a hitch. Unfortunately for those who would like to see Brackhaven fall, and

unbeknownst to everyone, Dietrich is not in his right mind. Heavily augmented with high-grade nanotechnology to better perform his duties as a federal investigator, Dietrich is suffering from a cybernetic malady that goes far beyond buggy ware or a garden-variety computer virus. Overwhelmed by a direct neutral interface with AI ghosts in the machinery of his body, Dietrich's mind has fragmented, and he passes in and out of periods of lucidity, sometimes advancing his own interests, sometimes acting randomly (and violently) to front an agenda he is totally unaware of. Dietrich's two (or perhaps more) distinct personalities have no knowledge or memory of each other's actions, but the gaps in Dietrich's memory are enough that he knows he is losing his mind.

In November of 2074, Dietrich and his crew of hired shadowrunners, in possession of the Project Daybreak files, were en route to a meeting with Edmund Jeffries, who had agreed to testify against Brackhaven in exchange for his own immunity. He never made the meeting; all of Dietrich's associates turned up dead, and Dietrich never turned up at all. The FBI declared him missing, and he has yet to be found. With Dietrich completely off the grid, most of Seattle's power players assumed that he had gone to ground. The truth is somewhat more complicated. While sometimes Dietrich is aware of who he is, what he has his hands on, and the fact that Kenneth Brackhaven would gladly pay millions of nuyen to see him out of the picture for good, the rest of the time Dietrich is not in control of his own body: another personality pilots him, pursuing its own random and inscrutable agenda. During one of those fugues, Dietrich managed to lose track of the commlink that can be used to connect Brackhaven to major criminal wrongdoing.

When Dietrich regains consciousness, he wants the commlink back, but he's not the only one. Brackhaven's people have had shadow operatives scouring the city with a fine-toothed comb for Dietrich and his evidence for months. Distract Attorney Dana Oaks, her pet attack troll KE Detective Tosh Athack, and all the survivors of Project Freedom interested in seeing Brackhaven burn want to get their hands on the proof that could be used to sink him too. But even larger powers are about to become involved. Japanacorp interests in Seattle want to see Brackhaven replaced with a puppet governor who can represent their interests more efficiently, while Ares will continue to back Brackhaven as long as they think he can govern in a way that's beneficial to them. They want the evidence so they can erase it and maintain the status quo (and perhaps squeeze a concession or two out of Brackhaven while they're at it).

Shortly after the adventure begins, the commlink that everyone wants finds its way into the hands of a very lucky runner team, who are about to find that they live in interesting times indeed.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

FBI Agent Seth Dietrich, the man who finally acquired proof that could take down Kenneth Brackhaven for good, has not been himself for the past several months. Some of the time he has been himself, and in that time he has struggled to come to terms with longer and longer periods of lost time while staying off the grid and hiding from Brackhaven's operatives. The rest of his time his body has been controlled by another personality, which has used it to take odious and mysterious actions of which Dietrich is totally unaware when he regains consciousness. After the most recent episode, Dietrich found himself lying on the bathroom floor of a decrepit motel in the Redmond Barrens, next to the dead body of a scumbag drug pusher, with blood on his hands. This is the worst awakening following a fugue of missing time that Dietrich has experienced to this point, and he flees the scene in panic.

The action begins less than twenty-four hours later, in mid-March of 2075, when a motley crew of rookie shadowrunners (the PCs) are woken up early in the morning and arrested by Knight Errant detectives on trumped-up charges. For a change, the runners really are innocent (of those charges, at least), having had nothing to do with last night's hijacking of a truckload of commlinks in Tacoma. They don't have to sweat long in KE detention before a "public defender," the notorious (and famously but unprovably corrupt) criminal attorney and fixer "Imaginary" Annie Goldsmith, comes to bail them out. Having a bunch of hardened crooks in one place, Annie offers them a job.

The runners meet with a Kim Shin-jo (going by the name Mr. Johnson) at a no-frills bar called Banshee in the Redmond Barrens. They are hired for a B&E job that must be completed that night. They're supposed to retrieve a commlink belonging

to a drug dealer named Oxycode from his room (312) at the Novelty Hills Sleep and Eat. The pay is not amazing, but the job should be easy and without complications. When the runners penetrate the almost nonexistent security at the no-tell motel, they find Oxycode dead, and not one but two commlinks. One belongs to Oxycode, while the other belongs to Dietrich. Both have been scrubbed of identifying data and appear to contain nothing more than a list of (largely nameless) contacts, meaning there is no obvious way of distinguishing one from the other.

When the runners return to Mr. Johnson with the commlinks, he is able to determine which is his, and while he is intrigued by the other, some of the names on their list worry him. He doesn't want to deal with something too hot. He leaves it to the runners to dispose of as they see fit, hinting that it might be valuable for them. Then he pays them for their work. He advises him they may want to find a buyer for it, but he himself is not interested.

The events of *Splintered State* are highly open ended, and for the most part, the events of the plot will depend on what the PCs choose to do with the unexpected (and dangerous) windfall that comes their way. Specifically, the order and structure of the plot will be determined by who the PCs ultimately choose to sell the commlink to. Other events, however, include multiple options for the gamemaster to determine how a given scene plays out.

With the mission done, the runners may show some initiative and perform legwork in seeking out a buyer for the unidentified commlink. On closer inspection, the runners discover the commlink contains a single file that at first appears to be encrypted but is actually fragmented. It can only be opened and accessed with the second half, presumably held elsewhere. Of course, not all of the runners' contacts are completely airtight and trustworthy, so doing so will cause word to leak that they're looking to move the commlink. Doing nothing is not a viable option, though, because if the runners merely sit on the commlink, eventually the same data will bubble down to the street from other sources. Operators for multiple factions are hitting the streets looking for Dietrich, and several of them managed to trace him to the motel where the runners acquired the commlink. With or without the runners being proactive, word will get out that they have the exceedingly precious commlink.

Depending on who the runners' contacts are, and who the runners' contacts know, it might be Brackhaven's people who first find out the runners have the commlink, or it might be Ares, Mitsuhama, or District Attorney Dana Oaks. Seth Dietrich himself is the interested party that finds out second, and he contacts the runners with an offer. He will buy his commlink back from them for the astonishingly high price of 100,000 nuyen. He arranges a meet for the next day at the Fort Lewis Zoological Gardens. Moments after that happens, a strike team sent by one of the above factions kicks in the doors of the runners' safe house in an effort to snatch the commlink, or beat its location out of the runners if the item is hidden. Ares operates through local Mafia elements, while Mitsuhama operates through their associates in the Seattle Yakuza. Brackhaven's black ops people have stooped to working with the Night Hunters, a devolved gang of twisted, predatory transhuman racists, while Dana Oaks, working together with ork fixer MacCallister and Ork Underground community organizer Eliza Bloom, sends Tosh Athack, a brutal and loyal KE detective and his strike team. Whoever winds up attacking the runners at home, it should send a clear message that what they have is a big deal, even if they don't fully understand why.

When he meets their runners at the zoo, Dietrich has lapsed into the alternate personality brought about by his cybernetic mental disorder. He does not know who the runners are, that they have his commlink, or why he has a pouch full of certified credsticks to exchange for it. Just as the confusion of the situation reaches its peak, Dietrich is killed right before the runners' faces by elite cyborg assassins from Chimera. A peaceful day at the zoo erupts into a firefight with dangerous paranormal critters caught in the middle, as the Chimera hit squad sets their sights on the PCs, looking to mop up essential witnesses. During the chaos, there are three important pieces of the puzzle up for grabs. The commlink the runners brought with them, the pouch with 100,000 nuyen in certified cred, and a second commlink that Dietrich has on him, with the second half of the fragmented file. The runners might manage to grab two or even all three of these and get out alive, but they only need to hang onto the commlink they came to the meet with to keep the adventure (and the chaos) on track.

After the massacre at the zoo, it should be very clear to the runners how urgent it is that they offload the commlink (which they may already have been paid for once). They could just throw it in the garbage, of course, but if they did that, how would they be able to get all of the factions gunning for it off their backs? Through their contacts, the runners can reach (or be reached by) four factions looking for the commlink now that Dietrich is out of the picture. One of them is District Attorney Oaks, representing the people who want to see Brackhaven take a long fall from grace to splatter on the pavement below. Two more are Ares (who want to determine if Brackhaven is still an efficient governor to serve their needs) and Mitsuhama (who, along with the other AAA Japanacorps, want Brackhaven out). Finally, Brackhaven's people, having failed to kill the runners once or twice by now, are willing to deal. Brackhaven's people make the best cash offer, while Oaks, in spite of being affiliated with law enforcement, has the moral high ground. The corps fall somewhere in the middle. The runners will have to choose who to deal with and arrange a meeting—hopefully one where they have home-field advantage.

If the runners have elected to sell the file to Brackhaven's representative, this scene is the climax of the adventure. The meeting is crashed by a high-level Mitsuhama shadow team. They want access to the evidence that can oust Brackhaven, and they're going all out to get it. (Alternatively, or in addition to this strike, Brackhaven's people may attempt to double-cross and eliminate the PCs. They're not overly concerned with getting their money back—they have plenty of it—but eliminating all witnesses is important to them.)

If the runners have chosen to go with any other buyer, the meeting with that buyer may be assaulted by an opposing team. The adventure, though, does not end there. By now, if the runners got the second commlink from the zoo meeting and have applied some time and technical skill, they will have been able to reconstruct the damaged file. If they didn't, then the buyer they chose has acquired it. Either way, the reconstructed file reveals the location where the evidence of Operation Daybreak has been hidden. As an insurance policy, one of Brackhaven's "dirty work" specialists concealed all of the Operation Daybreak data on a hidden server at Brackhaven Investments' downtown headquarters. Those operatives have since been culled or gone into hiding because they knew too much, and not even Brackhaven himself knows the incriminating information is so close.

Sponsored by the buyer they have chosen, the runners will be bankrolled and handsomely compensated if they can manage to extract the data from Brackhaven Investments and get out alive. Their employers will even provide some assistance with equipment and planning. Things are less likely to go smoothly than they are to result in a helicopter chase over the skies of downtown Seattle, but either way it will be a night to remember. If the runners survive, they will have acquired proof of Brackhaven's involvement in a criminal conspiracy. What happens to Brackhaven after this adventure remains to be seen, but the PCs' actions have made the governor's position even more unstable. Brackhaven has sleazed and schemed his way out of dire situations before, but this might be the one that finally pins him to the wall. As for the PCs, they've gotten paid twice for their work, once or twice for the commlink, and—perhaps more importantly than amassing a pile of nuyen—they have rid themselves of a commlink that many powerful people were willing to kill to get.

SCENE 0: ROUNDED UP

SCAN THIS

This scene is specifically for runners who haven't worked with each other before, useful if you're using this adventure for a convention game or to kick off a campaign. It provides a hook to get the runners together, and introduces a common NPC to front them some work. For any group, even established ones, it serves the purpose of setting the mood of the average shadowrunner's typical relationship with law enforcement, which gets played with later in the adventure when the runners are approached for help by District Attorney Dana Oaks. If your runners are already a regular crew or you're looking to save time, this scene can easily be skipped.

In this scene, the runners are hauled in by Knight Errant detectives for a Tacoma heist they legitimately had nothing to do with. They are interrogated individually (and roughly) by detectives, before being thrown in a holding cell with each other. After they have time to get acquainted, they are bailed out by runner-friendly attorney "Imaginary" Annie Goldsmith. Having helped them out of a tough spot, she offers them a piece of work that catalyzes the following scene, and in turn the rest of the adventure.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Bad morning doesn't begin to cut it when you're woken by a loud knock on your door at 7 a.m. on a Monday by two hard-nosed KE dicks and a half dozen patrolmen, all smiling like they won the lottery. They read you your rights on an armed robbery beef that doesn't sound familiar, throw the cuffs on, and rudely stuff you into the back of a Patrol-1. Twenty minutes later, you're in the dark and hostile interrogation room of the old Lone Star precinct downtown, which is now a Knight Errant franchise, getting enthusiastically interrogated by an Anglo dwarf named Detective Quinn and an Amerind ork named Detective Redoak.

The irony dawns on you before you're halfway through the hour-long interrogation, being asked the same questions over and over (and for that matter, harder and harder). You had *nothing to do with* the truck of commlinks that got hijacked in Tacoma at 8:00 p.m. last night. Wrongfully accused isn't how you'd usually describe yourself, but even a broken clock is innocent twice a year, or something. It's almost enough to bring a smile to your face, as there's no way they're going to make this stick.

It's not long before the detectives get tired of your stonewalling and realize they're not getting anywhere with their good cop, bad cop routine. They pull you out of the cramped interrogation room, and march you down the hall to a holding cell full of other malcontents like yourself, a bunch of unusual suspects.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The runners really do have nothing to do with the truck carrying a load of commlinks that got hijacked on its delivery route through Tacoma last night. Whether that hijacking has anything to do with anything is entirely up to the gamemaster. It could be a plot hook for a later adventure, or an irrelevant coincidence. Either way, the runners have enough of a rap sheet attached to their (fake) SINs and/or enough of a rep on the street to have been brought in: it's a case of mistaken identities. The PCs should have a fun time coming up with their characters' alibis for last night, true or bullshit, airtight or otherwise. Perhaps they were busy doing other crimes.

How much of the interrogation by Quinn and Redoak is roleplayed out and how much is glossed over depends entirely on how much your group enjoys roleplaying (specifically, on taking turns roleplaying individually with NPCs), and how much time you have. If you're pressed for time, or your PCs would prefer to get to the action, you can easily skip it.

If you choose to play through the interrogation scenes, both Quinn and Redoak are veteran detectives and will use classic film noir detective tricks to put plenty of leverage on the PCs to try and get them to break. This includes things like: a good cop, bad cop routine (they enjoy taking turns, rather than having one consistent persona), the constant threat

(but never the actual fact) of nasty physical violence, abrupt switching of interrogation tactics and lines of questioning to trip the PCs up, leaving the PCs to stew without food or water for long stretches of time before offering them to it, and false claims that their associates have flipped on them, or about to flip on them, if they don't flip first. Quinn and Redoak have the dice pools to back up their interrogation skills, but this scene is best handled through roleplaying, if you want to go into it at all. Being in police interrogation is downright unpleasant, especially if you haven't done the crime in question, and there are good reasons for criminals to hate cops. If the runners are particularly smart (or the players street-savvy), they will refuse comment until their attorney is present.

No matter what happens, no matter what persuasive arguments or evidence they're presented with, Quinn and Redoak will refuse to even seriously consider the fact of the PCs' innocence until Annie shows up, short of something like magical persuasion (an extraordinarily bad idea; see below).

The runners should probably not have met each other before if you're running this scene, but all winding up in the same holding cell (a ten-by-ten meter cage, with a concrete floor, walls and ceilings of sturdy iron bars, a drain in the floor and a nasty looking chemical toilet in one corner, with a row of hard plastic bunks along one wall) gives them a chance to get acquainted. And they may well know each other by reputation, even assuming they're all street-level newbs or rank amateurs.

The downtown Knight Errant precinct is a fortress, far better designed for keeping unfortunates in than keeping those same unfortunates out. The officers there are legion, they are well equipped, and their procedure is airtight. Cameras and maglocks are everywhere, and the system is monitored in real time by multiple security spiders and strong IC. They take appropriate special precautions when dealing with mages and hackers, but the PCs are suspects, not convicts, and there is a limit to how rough the KE officers can treat them. Still, the runners are isolated, unequipped, and outnumbered, watched at all times by a hornet's test of armed, trained law enforcement officers. Trying to use force or any overtly hostile actions—including magic—would be suicidally, catastrophically stupid, and that fact should be repeated until the players internalize it, lest they get tempted.

Once the runners have had time to get acquainted with each other, Imaginary Annie shows up to bail them out:

> *You've been sweating in lockup for a while without access to a phone call or your lawyer; in other words, the world is still turning. Just as you're starting to seriously worry that, in the ultimate irony, you might actually go down for a crime you didn't even commit, you hear the clang of one of the security doors in the hallway, and the sound of the KE detectives bickering with a hotheaded female attorney. You hear the phrases "warrant," "wrongful arrest," "probable cause," "putative identification," and "unlawful questioning without legal counsel."*
>
> *Then a begrudging and bewildered-looking uniformed officer unlocks the cage door, and a short, smiling woman in a grey, pinstriped business suit strides past him. The cops almost seem scared of the tiny little norm chica. She's cute and slight, with short, neon-orange hair and a dusting of freckles. She looks all of fourteen, but starts talking like a high-speed robot built for dispensing rapid-fire legal jargon: "Hey, just so you guys know, I just told them they have to put you before a lineup, get the prosecutor to formally press charges, or let you go, or I'm gonna have their gonads for wrongful arrest and violation of your rights as UCAS citizens. You may be far from the forty-eight-hour deadline, but they really screwed the pooch on this one, and privatized rent-a-cops don't get blanket protection under Qualified Immunity statutes."*
>
> *You're not sure you followed all of that, or any of it, when she presents you with her card (an ARO, naturally). It reads "Imaginary" Annie Goldsmith, Invisible Esquire.*

Annie doesn't want any payment for her services, claiming that any public defender fresh out of law school could have seen through this obvious "fishing trip." Taking the runners to coffee at the local Soybucks after she gets them out of lock-up (and any of their gear back), she mentions that she's looking for a few good metas for a piece of work she's contracting for a third party, with the promise of more to come if they do well. She gives them a matchbook emblazoned with the logo of a bar called Banshee in the Barrens, with a commlink number scrawled on it in ballpoint ink, along with a time, underlined: 7 p.m. This will get the runners to the next plot point, while they gain Imaginary Annie as a contact, although if they want to use her legal services again, they'll of course need to pay her full retainer: she's not ordinarily in the business of giving out freebies.

It might be a clever twist to subtly insinuate that it was Annie herself that arranged for the runners to be picked up by Knight Errant, but she won't even come close to outright saying it. Only very astute players with *very* paranoid characters should be able to come to this conclusion, and even then it should be anything but a surety.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Since this is an introductory scene for new players and characters, we wholeheartedly recommend that the gamemaster *not* push the envelope here. However, if you wish to make this scene more challenging for the PCs, the way to do so isn't by adding more and better cops: there should already be enough LEOs on site to make escape a clear impossibility, particularly with the PCs completely unarmed and unarmored (adepts, mages, and technomancers may have no need of guns, but *everyone* needs armor). Instead, draw out the interrogation scenes longer.

Keep in mind that the cops here are, as Annie says, just "going fishing." They don't have any real evidence linking the PCs to the scene, and they can't hold them long. Therefore their attempts to get confessions or clues out of the PCs are based largely on bluffing and manipulation, assertions that their "teammates" have flipped on them, and so forth. While the PCs should not get nailed for the truck hijacking they had

nothing to do with, it's entirely possible that they'll crack under the pressure and self-incriminate with a confession of something they *did* do, giving KE an excuse to hold them. This is especially true if they need to roll things out and successfully oppose Quinn and/or Redoak's Interrogation Tests. Since this scene assumes the runners don't know each other, there's not much chance of them flipping on each other for real, but if they do, that should be a tactic the cops take to sow betrayals within the team.

Again, we stress you should *not* push the envelope here. Let the PCs get to the real action of the run, and then throw their asses in the fire if you're so inclined.

DEBUGGING

There are three major things that can go wrong with this scene. The first two are related: the runners may attempt to break out of KE holding, rather than waiting the cops out for Annie to arrive, and, similarly, the players may actually interrupt the prepared text at the beginning to attempt to resist arrest, fighting the cops at their own home. The best thing you can do is to tell them, without being coy, and without getting annoyed, that such a course of action is immensely stupid.

Even if the PCs somehow fight the cops and win, they'll be slowing down the game and wrenching the adventure off track. However, if your players insist on fighting Knight Errant's finest while severely outnumbered and outgunned, you're going to have to give them what they want. Play it out. Chances are the PCs will wind up in the precinct holding cell anyway ... with some more legitimate charges stuck to them. They've made Imaginary Annie's work harder, but you can have her at least help the runners post bail, with the threat hanging over their heads that if they don't do the job for her, she'll take her money back and they'll be right back in the slammer.

The last problem is the PCs self-incriminating or flipping on each other. Unless you run a particularly sadistic game, you probably want to avoid this, and fortunately, that's easily done. The scene structure glosses over the interrogation with prepared text by default, so if you don't want to run into this problem, just don't push the envelope. If you choose to, know what you're getting into, and be prepared.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

The uniformed Knight Errant patrolmen use the stats for the Police Patrols on p. 383 of *SR5*, with some Lieutenants thrown in to the mix for good measure. If things get really hairy, they have access to more or less whatever additional equipment they need from their armory, including heavier weapons and armor. They have on-site mages (use the CorpSec Lieutenant on p. 382, *SR5*, scaled up if necessary). If the drek *really* hits the rotating blades, a SWAT rapid response team will be called in: use the stats for Elite CorpSec on p. 384, *SR5*.

Additionally, stats are provided for the two named Knight Errant detectives. Additional detectives in the building should use the stats for the Police Patrol Lieutenant (p. 383, *SR5*).

DET. JARED QUINN

MALE DWARF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5 (6)	4	4 (5)	5	6	5	5	3	2	4.3

Initiative	9 (10) + 2D6
Condition Monitor	11 / 11
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 7, Social 6
Armor	12
Skills	Athletics 3, Clubs (Batons) 4 (+2), Gymnastics 2, Electronics 3, First Aid 2, Influence skill group 3, Intimidation (Interrogation) 4 (+2), Mechanic 2, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pistols (Revolvers) 5 (+2), Stealth skill group 4, Unarmed Combat (Block) 4 (+2)
Qualities	Guts, Toughness
Augmentations	Control rig 1, datajack, sleep regulator, synaptic booster 1
Gear	Armor jacket [w/ Nonconductivity (Rating 4), shock frills], commlink (Device Rating 4), contacts [Rating 1, w/ image link]
Weapons	Extendable baton [Club, Acc 5, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP —] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ laser sight, concealable holster]

DET. LARRY REDOAK

MALE ORK

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
6 (7)	4 (6)	4	6 (9)	4	3	5	4	2	2.6

Initiative	11 + 2D6
Condition Monitor	11 / 10
Limits	Physical 8 (10), Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	11
Skills	Archery (Bows) 4 (+2), Athletics 3, Close Combat 5, Gymnastics 2, Influence skill group 3, Intimidation (Interrogation) 4 (+2), Outdoors 4, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 4 (+2), Stealth skill group 3
Qualities	Gremlins 1, High Pain Tolerance 2, Magic Resistance 2
Augmentations	Cyberarm (left, obvious, advanced, Rating 3 w/ Agility 6, Strength 6, Strength Enhancement 3, and Heavy Pistol cybergun), dermal plating 1 (alphaware), plastic bone lacing (alphaware), wired reflexes 1 (alphaware)
Gear	Actioneer Business Suit, contacts (Rating 3 w/ image link, flare compensation, and smartlink)
Weapons	Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 5S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 11(c), w/ external smartgun system, stick-n-shock ammo] Sap [Club, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 8(11)P, AP —]

SCENE 1: YOU KNOW THE DRILL

SCAN THIS

In this scene, the runners are hired by Mr. Johnson at a bar called Banshee in the Redmond Barrens. The run is simple: retrieve a commlink from a rundown motel in the Barrens. The B&E and robbery must be completed the same night as the job. The pay is modest, but the job isn't exactly breaking into Zurich Orbital, or Fort Knox for that matter. Unbeknownst to Mr. Johnson or the PCs, however, this simple assignment will lead to a cascade of major events that will shake the criminal, political, and corporate landscape of Seattle.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Even by your standards, Banshee is not a nice place. If it wasn't evident enough from the rundown facade of the building (consisting of crumbling twentieth-century wood and brick) and the blinking red neon sign slowly dying away to the last phosphor, the state of things would be made clear by the guy who comes crashing out the batwing doors as you're attempting to wander in. Not running, but thrown, he crashes to the ground and rolls. He's a brown-haired Anglo norm in a synthleather jacket, with snot and puke crusting his chin, whiskey staining his shirt collar, and a hell of a shiner.

"And this time remember to stay out," shouts the pissed-off ork bouncer, dusting off his hands (one of which is cybernetic). Then his yellow-eyed gaze turns to you. He points to a peeling paper sign on the brick wall just inside the door that reads NO WEAPONS in jagged capitals (the Defiance T-250 leaning on the wall below it is apparently an exception), and then extends a metal mesh basket where you can deposit yours. From inside you can hear the wailing of orxploitation-influenced nu-metal from a sound system that sounds suspiciously like a busted jukebox, rising above the tumult of clinking glasses, raucous conversation, and at least one bar fight about to break out. Your nose detects a unique mélange of stale whiskey, spilled beer, sawdust, and sour sweat. Handing over your most obvious weapons to the bouncer, you scan the place for Mr. Johnson, hoping you can find him before someone puts him—or you—in a body bag.

All in all, it's just a typical night in the Redmond Barrens.

HOOKS

The runners are there to get a job, and that should be enough to get most teams interested in the scene. To set the scene, play up the filth and squalor of Banshee, the unfriendliness of everyone there, and the seething rage of the disenfranchised underclasses ready to explode into violence at the slightest provocation. Another hook is the guy who got thrown out, although the runners shouldn't have a chance to interact with him here in anything more than a cursory way: when they meet Seth Dietrich later, though, they'll have a chance to realize he was the Anglo norm they saw getting bounced from Banshee. Dietrich could not remember being thrown out the last time because it didn't happen to *him*, not really. It happened to one of his other personalities.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Security at Banshee is fairly lax, and most of the patrons are armed. The bouncer ("Gorgeous George" is his handle, although he is hideous and his given name is Andrew) lets anything smaller than a heavy pistol by without a question. Anything larger than a heavy pistol, he confiscates, or he refuses the runners entry if the runners stupidly fail to hand it in. He doesn't exactly have access to a state of the art MAD detector, but then again, anything bigger than a heavy pistol ain't exactly subtle. If the runners check their Predators at the door, good for them; they can pick them up on the way out.

If they try to conceal their heavy pistols and slip them past George, have each PC who does so roll Palming + Agility [Physical] versus George's Perception + Intuition [Mental]; George has a Perception dice pool of 4 [Mental Limit of 4] for the purpose of this test. If the runners make no effort to conceal heavy pistol-sized weapons, the bouncer spots them and demands they hand them over. Runners are given plastic chits for their stashed weapons and can hand them over to grab their gear on the way out. Only if the runners are bringing in something really nasty (both dangerous to multiple patrons and concealable, like grenades) will George become really upset and possibly deny the runners entry. Certainly, he will deny their *grenades* entry.

Nearly everyone in Banshee is scum looking for a tussle: street survivors, muscle, enforcers, wannabe runners, and plenty of gangers. Both the Blood Mountain Boys and the 162s are there in numbers, not currently at war with each other, but keeping well to their own corners (see *Pushing the Envelope*, below). If the runners are looking for trouble, if they even look at anyone wrong, they'll find it. If they stick to their business and pay for their drinks with certified credsticks, they can conduct the deal unmolested.

Mr. Johnson is a thin, somewhat greasy looking male Korean human, with a pencil-thin mustache and a comb over. He's wearing a lined coat in a dull crimson color over a black business-casual dress shirt and white tie, and has a gleaming datajack on his temple, but no other obvious augmentations or weapons. He recognizes the runners and waves them over. He introduces himself as Mr. Johnson when they sit, and then a strung-out ork barmaid, half comatose from the derms of bliss on her arm, comes over to slurringly take their drink orders (Mr. Johnson is halfheartedly nursing a 7 and 7). Once the drinks are brought over to them, Mr. Johnson suggests (sarcastically) that having sampled enough of the place's delectable ambiance, they get down to business.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> *Mr. Johnson leans forward and lowers his voice.*
>
> *"This is a very simple piece of work that I'm sure is well within your capabilities. The only catch is that it has to be done in a very short timeframe. I need an item retrieved from a nearby business and brought back here. Security*

should be minimal, with no need for overt violence, although I'll be honest," he smiles less than charmingly, "I really don't care at all what you do to get it. The pay is (1,000 nuyen times the number of runners) for your group to split up as you see fit. If you agree, I'll tell you where you're going and what you're looking for."

At this point, the runners can negotiate. Have them roll their Negotiation + Charisma [Social] versus Mr. Johnson's Negotiation dice pool, which is 9 (he has a Social limit of 5). Each net hit the runners achieve raises the payment to the entire group by 500 nuyen. No matter what, Mr. Johnson won't pay more than twice his initial offer (although it's spectacularly unlikely that the PCs will achieve that many net hits). Initially, Mr. Johnson offers no upfront payment, but he is willing to offer any bonus nuyen the runners earn with a successful Negotiation Test upfront. Mr. Johnson is less flexible with information than he is with cash: he won't divulge *any* more details about the job until the runners firmly agree, look him in the eye, and shake his hand.

Once the runners do that, read or paraphrase the following:

"What I need is a commlink. It's currently held by this guy named Oxycode, a real piece of drek–small time pimp, pusher, hustler. I don't give a fuck what happens to him. He could win the lottery or get sold for parts to Tamanous for all I care. I just need his commlink. He's at room 312 at the Novelty Hills Sleep & Eat. That means the commlink's there too. You have any questions? If not you should get going. I need that commlink tonight."

The truth is, Mr. Johnson doesn't have much more information and therefore can't divulge much of what he knows. He won't explain what's on the commlink, why he needs it, or anything more about who Oxycode is. He is telling the absolute truth when he says he has no reason to expect any heightened security at the Novelty Hills Sleep & Eat. If the runners ask him for security data like maps or passcodes, he laughs in their faces: "It's not exactly an MCT Zero Zone, *omae*. Besides, what'm I paying you for if not to worry about that shit?"

The truth is, except for one small detail, the job is exactly what it appears to be. While it's not important to the adventure, in case the PCs somehow get the truth out of Mr. Johnson, here's what's really going on with the initial run. Mr. Johnson is really Kim Shin-jo, an underboss in the Choson Seoulpa ring. A certain local Asian businessman pays the Choson ring for protection, and now Oxycode has a compromising video of his daughter and is threatening to blackmail her. Kim first tried to buy Oxycode off, but Oxycode got greedy and spat on his offer. Now the businessman is freaking out (hence the urgency), and he's doing things a different way.

The sprawl won't miss a lone drug dealer. Mr. Johnson figures that the runners will kill him in the burglary, being what they are; if they don't, he'll have his own guys get him later. Mr. Johnson isn't about to attempt to arrange for outright wetwork through unknown operatives, though, since that would be a good way to land him a long prison sentence if it turns out the runners can't be trusted.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If your players (or you) are already itching for a fight, here's just one of several ways you could use the rough crowd of Banshee to give them one. Some of the patrons there are ghouls, belonging to the 162s, a ghoul gang with ties to the organlegging syndicate Tamanous. You could have the ghouls decide the runners look tasty, or that their implants look like they'd fetch a good price on the secondhand market, or both—maybe they want to eat some parts and sell the rest. When the runners go to leave, the 162s jump the runners, trying to pile on them with numbers and the element of surprise. They try to hit the runners before they can retrieve their heavy gear from the bouncer.

There are two 162 ghouls for every runner: nonetheless this should be a straightforward, quick, and easy fight. Even with superior numbers and the element of surprise, the ghouls should be no match for the runners. However, if the runners are over their heads, they can easily purchase help by offering the Blood Mountain Boys hanging out there anything of even moderate value in exchange for their assistance. While not at war with the 162s, the BMBs are spoiling for a fight and will jump at the chance to make a profit. There is one of them for each runner.

If the fight breaks out inside the bar, the combatants use their bare fists (or claws in the case of ghouls) until one of the runners pulls out a knife or club; they then use melee weapons until one of the runners pulls out a gun. If the runners are wise, they won't escalate things. If they do, they may gain a point of Notoriety, and Gorgeous George will certainly grab his shotgun off the wall and start opening up on anyone using firearms inside (or just outside) Banshee.

No law enforcement will show up at any point—this is the Barrens, after all. If the runners actually lose to the ghouls, they are likely to become dinner. Such is the risk of pushing the envelope.

DEBUGGING

Honestly, the runners would have to be willfully stupid to fail to gain entrance or to offend Mr. Johnson so badly he rescinds the job offer. If the players are very new or the characters very dumb, gently remind them that no one else in the bar is packing heavy ordnance, and it's probably safe to stash theirs by the door. If the runners are too unprofessional to get past the bouncer without a fight, then they are very rightfully out of a job.

If the runners balk at the low pay Mr. Johnson is offering, have him point out that it's1,000 nuyen apiece for a single night's work, against minimal opposition and low security. In the shadows, you seldom get a job this easy and uncomplicated. Allow the PCs to succeed at Judge Intentions (Charisma + Intuition) Tests to see that Mr. Johnson is clearly telling the truth. If that's not enough to convince them, or if

they refuse to do the job for Mr. Johnson at the rates he offers, Mr. Johnson quickly loses patience. "You just missed out on a chance to get paid to walk down the street, walk back here, and go home," he says, getting up to leave.

If the PCs seem intent on sabotaging the job opportunity, let them. Have the ghouls attack so you can at least get one combat out of the evening. If you want to continue with the rest of this adventure, Dietrich's commlink can find its way into the runners' hands some other way without this easy introductory step.

PLACES OF INTEREST

BANSHEE

1267 163rd Avenue NE

You'd think this place got its name from its crappy Thursday night karaoke sessions with a tinny sound system and drunken patrons who can't carry a tune in a bucket, but truth is I have no idea. The Banshee is strictly no-frills: a bar, some strings of LEDs, a pissed-looking ork bouncer, and cheap booze. Its prime appeal is being so unremarkable and low-key enough to do business in, provided you keep an eye on the hungrier-looking patrons.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

GORGEOUS GEORGE (PISSED OFF ORK BOUNCER)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
8 (9)	3 (5)	3	6 (8)	4	2	3	2	2	5

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	12 (13) / 10
Limits	Physical 8 (10), Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	13
Skills	Clubs 3, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 4, Longarms (Shotguns) 2 (+2), Perception 1, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Redmond Barrens 3
Qualities	Home Ground, Toughness
Augmentations	Cyberarm (left, obvious, advanced, Rating 2, w/ Armor 1 and Strength Enhancement 3)
Gear	Armor jacket, Meta Link commlink, 1 dose of novacoke
Weapons	Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, Acc 4, DV 12P(f), AP +4, SS/SA, RC —, 5(m), w/ flechette ammo]

Notes: The base damage of a punch from Gorgeous George's cyberarm is 8P. His flesh and blood arm only inflicts 6S. His dice pool for throwing a punch is 8; 10 if he uses the cyberarm.

1625 GANGERS (TWO PER PC)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
7	4	4	5	2	2	3	1	4	5

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Movement	As base metatype
Condition Monitor	12
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 3, Social 3
Armor	5
Skills	Assensing 2, Blades 3, Perception 3, Pistols 3, Stealth 4, Unarmed Combat 4
Powers	Armor 1, Dual Natured, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Smell), Natural Weapon (Claws: DV (STR+1)P, AP –1), Sapience
Weaknesses	Allergy (Sunlight, Moderate), Dietary Requirement (Metahuman Flesh), Reduced Senses (Blind)
Gear	Synthleather jacket
Weapons	Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC —, 11(c)] Machete [Blade, Acc 5, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP –2]

BLOOD MOUNTAIN BOYS

Use the stats Ganger on p. 382 of *SR5*, including one Ganger Lieutenant. There should be one Blood Mountain Boy for each PC.

TYPICAL BANSHEE PATRONS

Use the Thug Lieutenant on p. 381 of *SR5*, except each wears an armor vest (this is the Redmond Barrens after all). There are 4d6 + 4 other patrons (not counting Mr. Johnson, the runners, and the gangers) present at Banshee when the runners arrive, and all of them will happily join a brawl that breaks out on either side, although they'll dive for cover if a gunfight breaks out.

SCENE 2: WITHOUT A HITCH

SCAN THIS

The runners case and infiltrate the Novelty Hills Sleep And Eat, gaining access to room 312 with little to no difficulty (unless the gamemaster feels like adding some trouble). Inside, they find Oxycode dead (strangled) on the floor of his cramped room, with two commlinks sitting on the floor next to him. Both 'links have been scrubbed of all ID and don't have much on them at a glance except two different call lists of anonymized contacts.

When the runners bring the commlinks back to Mr. Johnson, he gives them the balance of their payment and takes Oxycode's commlink. He leaves the runners to keep the commlink, with the hint that it might be worth something (although even he has no idea how much).

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

If not for the sad neon sign and pushy AROs loudly proclaiming it the "Novelty Hills Sleep And Eat," you'd think this structure was exactly what it used to be: a large warehouse. Down the street is a Stuffer Shack so encrusted in graffiti it's almost unrecognizable; every other building in the immediate neighborhood is condemned, or ought to be.

A trio of beleaguered looking prostitutes—human, elf, and dwarf—in torn fishnet hose, synthleather jackets, and miniskirts loiters at one corner of the motel. A few other similarly destitute customers come and go, renting and abandoning rooms, buying and selling drugs, or shuttling stuffers back and forth from the Shack. But the area is mostly deserted. Through the large glass windows above the motel's main doors, which bleed weak yellow light onto the dark, smog-ceilinged streets, you can see the three-tiered, pipe-framed access catwalk setup.

It's time to make your approach, chummer. Plan and execute, but do it in a hurry. The night is ticking away.

HOOKS

Play up the grunge, desperation, and danger of the Redmond Barrens at night. This is a place that most of Seattle's inhabitants would go to great lengths to avoid. Police sirens are constant, but never sound close enough to help. Remote gunfire echoes across the concrete canyons and scarred salvage yards like thunder. Most people living here are whacked out on drugs or BTLs just to get through the misery of their day-to-day existence, cocooned in filth on the sidewalk, shivering and twitching as their brain is secluded in its own false and isolated paradise. Rabid dogs, devil rats the size of fat tomcats, and worse things snarl and salivate from the darkened alleyways. Gangs prowl the streets like wolfpacks, looking for prey they can pounce on, culling the metahuman herd of the weak and sickly.

This is the hell on earth where failed runners and others that society has chewed up and regurgitated are damned to. The runners should want to get out of here as fast as possible before something eats them, or kills them for their shoes.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The Novelty Hills Sleep and Eat has no security to speak of (unless you choose to **Push The Envelope**; see below). The front doors are unlocked, and just to the left inside of them is a reinforced armorglass cage, the Novelty Hills' sole concession to safety. A small, thin, wiry dwarf named Lucas Kash is one of the motel's managers, and the one on duty inside when the runners get there. He's terse, cold, and apathetic by default, but might graduate to mean and abrasive if the runners interact with him long enough. He doesn't much like his lot in life, or his job, if you can imagine.

Kash barely looks at the runners if they come in the door, but he marks their presence. He assumes they're there to rent

a room, so he reels off the usual spiel in a deadpan monotone without looking at them once: "Fifty nuyen per night, two people to a cubicle, no exceptions, trolls seventy-five nuyen, one troll to a bed, no exceptions, checkout time is 8 a.m., the staff of Novelty Hills Sleep and Eat is not responsible for your lost and stolen possessions, there are no restrooms on the premises, you have to go to the Stuffer Shack down the block for that, money up front, we only except certsticks with hard nuyen." All transactions are processed through the cage: there's a hardened credstick reader built into it, outward facing. Rooms are unlocked with maglock passkeys, which are slid through a one centimeter tall slot in the cage. The motel has plenty of vacancies if some of the runners want to get rooms (or pretend to).

For more details on the Novelty Hills Sleep and Eat, see **Places of Interest** below.

When the runners gain access to Room 312, read or paraphrase the following:

> *The tiny cubicle (two meters wide, three meters tall, four meters deep) is dark except for the bland light from a portable trideo set. In the undulating dimness, you (or your low-light optics) barely make out the head and right arm of an ork, protruding past the far-edge of the slab-like plastic bed built into the wall on your left. The head and arm aren't severed; they're just the only part of him visible, peeking out past the corner of the bed.*
>
> *A closer look reveals he's dead, his lips purple, his eyes glazed over, staring slackly at the nothing in the upper left corner of where his vision used to be. Lying on the floor beside him, just out of reach, are two commlinks.*

One commlink is a Sony Emperor, and the other is a Hermes Ikon. Oxycode's is the Sony Emperor; the other commlink belongs to Seth Dietrich. That latter device will catalyze the rest of the adventure. A cursory examination reveals no identifying details on either commlink; a more thorough examination won't turn anything up either, as both commlinks have been thoroughly purged. Each commlink contains a digital address book with 5D6 + 3 entries (don't let on why you're rolling dice and roll this in front of the players in order to make them paranoid; look at the meaningless number and nod gravely). Each contact on each commlink is referred to by a meaningless string of alphanumeric characters (feel free to generate those too), the output of a popular anonymization app (one hit on any relevant computer-related Knowledge skill garners this information).

If the runners decide to start calling random people with either commlink, point out that such behavior would not exactly be the apex of professionalism. If they proceed anyway, Oxycode's commlink (the Emperor) connects them to a bunch of street scum looking to buy/sell drugs. The only other numbers in it are the businessman that reached out to Mr. Johnson, neither of whom will answer a call from this number for obvious reasons. None of the contacts on Dietrich's commlink (the Ikon) answers, at least the first time it is called.

If the runners investigate Oxycode himself, a single hit on a Medicine + Logic [Mental] Test reveals he was strangled. A second hit reveals it happened less than twelve hours ago, but more than six hours ago. Besides the two commlinks, all he has on him is an armor jacket, inside one pocket of which is a Browning Ultra-Power (with a full clip of regular ammo: he didn't get a chance to fire on his attacker) and a certified credstick with 150 nuyen on it. However, a thorough search of the room (treat it as an open-ended Perception + Intuition [Mental] Test, with an interval of one minute; the threshold is 10, but don't tell the PCs that. Just let them keep searching until the find something or give up) turns up a secret compartment meticulously cut into the bottom of the bed. Inside is a package of drugs, including:

- The better part of a full kilo of novacoke, wrapped tightly in plastic (100 doses).
- A packet of bliss in brown powder form (100 doses).
- A wax paper sheet with 30 dots of zen (30 doses).

If the runners choose to sell Oxycode's drug stash, the street value for the whole thing should amount to around 750 to 1,500 nuyen, depending on their Contacts, the loyalty of their Contacts, and their Negotiation Test success.

GET PAID, GO HOME

When the runners return to Mr. Johnson, he looks pleased that they brought him a commlink, but confused that they brought him two. "What's this?" he asks, and it's likely the runners don't have too many answers. If they're particularly quick thinking and entrepreneurial sorts, they might wish to sell it to him for an extra fee. If so, he won't bite.

He quickly scans the address book of each commlink, and finds his the commlink number of his client in the Sony Emperor. Satisfied, he drops it into the pocket of his lined coat, drums his fingers on the table, and asks desultorily what became of Oxycode. Whatever the runners answer (short of an outlandishly creative lie) he merely smiles, shrugs expressively, and nods. After he spends a few moments investigating the Hermes Ikon, he fishes the credstick with the rest of the runners' payment out of his pocket, and he slides it across the table to them.

> *"If I have any work I need done in the future, I'll get in touch with you through channels," he says. Then, as he's getting up to leave, he tosses one of the team members back the other commlink, with a quizzical look. "You may want to hold onto that, kid. It might be worth something to somebody. Not me, but somebody. Worst comes to worst," he adds, grinning, "it's a nice commlink." Then he makes his exit. Your fingertips twitch, and part of you want to give in to the whispers of paranoia and toss the fancy commlink in the nearest garbage can immediately, just in case. However, you have a feeling Mr. Johnson's on the level, and since this job didn't exactly pay a mountain of money, it's probably a good idea not to throw away potential opportunities for more cred.*

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

This scene is again meant to play out largely without additions or diversions. Trigger-happy gamemasters and players shouldn't worry: there is certainly plenty of combat later in the adventure, maybe entirely too much for the PCs to handle. The ease of this section of the run is intentional, designed to simultaneously invest the PCs with the appropriate (and in the immediate case, unnecessary) paranoia and/or to lull them into a false sense of security for later events. At a glance, these might seem like contradictory objectives, but combined together, paranoia and a sense of security often combine into an ominous foreboding that later on, things will get much, much rougher. Which, in this case, is absolutely true.

However, if you want to add at least a little bit of a speed bump to this scene, perhaps to lessen the paranoia and increase the false sense of security, Oxycode could have hired a posse of Crimson Crush gangers to hang out at the motel and protect him after learning that the Choson Ring was gunning for him (none of them was guarding the side entrance, which is why they failed miserably) and decided he needed to shell out for some backup. There are two Crimson Crush 'bangers, proudly wearing their red gang colors, for each runner. They are split evenly between the lobby, where their loitering is pissing off Kash (who's too scared of them to do anything), and the front of the building, immediately outside the front door. If you want to add the Crimson Crush to this scene, you'll find their stats in *Grunts and Moving Targets* below.

DEBUGGING

To manage to screw this one up, the runners would have to really focus their skillset on colossal incompetence. All they have to do is walk in the front door, rent one or more rooms on the third floor, walk up the stairs to 312, and kick the door down or disable the maglock. There are no security cameras, and no one's watching. Even better, the runners could slip in the side door, bypassing the easy maglock keypad, climb up the back stairs, and make it to 312 without being seen by a soul. Even if the runners manage to screw this up, there are precious little consequences for them to face. The absence of alarms, a panic button, or concerned citizens means that nothing they can do wrong, within reason, will bring reinforcements, short of forgetting the room number, kicking down every door, and executing every patron.

And if your players are doing it *that* wrong, they probably have no interest in things going right.

One thing that could definitely go wrong with a scene this easy if the runners massively overthink things, slowing the scene down to a crawl with their planning and preparation. If the issue is one of game time, point out that the runners only have a few hours to complete this job and get paid. If the issue is that they are burning up the game session in real time, that's a stickier problem: it would probably be best to tell them, outright, that they're overthinking things. Some jobs really are this easy, at least until proven otherwise, and they don't need to get all *Mission: Impossible* right now. They'll get their chance to go into all-out *Ocean's Eleven* mode later in the adventure.

PLACES OF INTEREST

NOVELTY HILLS SLEEP AND EAT

Novelty Hill Road & West Snoqualmie Valley Road

This refurbished warehouse is filled with a steel-pipe framework holding racks of sleep cubicles stacked fifteen high, with narrow catwalks running between them. The motel recently upgraded a part of the warehouse, adding four stories of actual rooms to the coffin-like cubicles stacked in the other half. Despite the upgrade, the owners continue to ignore all the niceties of Seattle public health and building codes, so there is no fire alarm, sprinkler system, and limited bathrooms (including the cleanest restroom in the vicinity, which is in the Stuffer Shack down the street). The locks of most of the cubicles work.

The Cage (Structure 9, Armor 9) that Kash does business out of has a lock on the inside (Device Rating 2). Kash's commlink, also Device Rating 2, has the proper passcodes, which is how he gets in and out. The same device also controls the door locks for all of the other rooms. There are no other devices controlling automated systems in the motel here, mainly because the motel *has* no other automated functions (no panic button, no fire alarm, no sprinkler system). The credstick reader is hardwired and not connected to the Matrix; it dumps funds into a second certified credstick on the other side. The sign plastered on the outside of the cage reading "EMPLOYEES CARRY NO CASH ON PREMISES" in English, Or'zet, and Spanish is basically true: the credstick on the other side of the cage has only 450 nuyen on it.

In order to unlock or open the cage, or to unlock/open any of the room doors without a key, the hacker must acquire a mark on the device, and then successfully use the Control Device action. If the hacker succeeds, they can unlock any door in the building. If they unlock the cage with Kash inside, Kash's first action will be to hit the manual control for the door and then override it from the inside, locking himself in. Since there is no panic button and the cage is almost soundproof (he normally communicates through a small mic and speakers), he will try to wait the PCs out until help arrives.

Assuming the PCs go in the front door, they immediately see that the more luxurious (yes, that's a relative term) side of the motel has four floors of rooms in a U-shaped configuration: each floor has fifteen rooms against the west wall, five rooms against the south wall, and another fifteen rooms against the east wall. A narrow metal catwalk with a weak-looking railing, painted in striped yellow and black safety paint, provides access to each of the rooms on each level. Stairwells in the southwest and northeast corner allow easy access between floors. In the northwest corner, on the first floor, there is a metal security door (Structure 9, Armor 9) that is used by long-term guests: it leads directly outside, and is the most discreet point of access into the building. It is secured by a Rating 3 maglock keypad; long-term guests are given a new code weekly.

The "eat" portion of the sleep and eat is an automat of interconnected vending machines located along the north wall on the first floor. The bargain-basement vendors have a Device Rating of 2, if anyone wants to bother hacking them.

Each individual door lock, including the one to room 312 (located on the third floor, on the west side), is a pitiful Rating 1 maglock cardreader. The only secure thing about them is an accident: they don't count as devices in and of themselves, and can only be controlled through the Matrix by hacking the device inside the cage. However, the doors are not at all difficult to force (Structure 3, Armor 2), should the runners go that route. Most of the rooms, including 312, do not have windows. The doors and the few windows have bright red stickers on the outside insisting loudly that an alarm will go off if they are tampered with or forced: these stickers are a lie, as the alarms either were never installed or are not working. A character should be able to realize the obvious bluff with two successes on a Logic + Security Design [Mental] Test. The windows have no alarm circuits, the doors aren't alarmed, and the maglocks don't have any anti-tamper systems. Each room is a (typically windowless) 2x3x4 meter cubicle.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

LUCAS KASH (MOTEL MANAGER)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
2	4	3	4	4	3	3	1	1	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 4
Armor	13
Skills	Clubs 2, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Intimidation 4, Longarms (Shotguns) 2 (+2), Negotiation (Bartering) 4 (+2), Perception 2
Knowledge Skills	Local Gangs 3, Novelty Hills Customers 5, Redmond Barrens 3
Qualities	Home Ground, Toughness
Gear	Armor vest, Meta Link commlink
Weapons	Stun baton [Clubs, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5] Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, Acc 4, DV 10P, AP –1, SS/SA, RC —]

CRIMSON CRUSH GANGERS (PROFESSIONAL RATING 1)

There are two gangers for each PC, divided evenly between loitering out front and kicking back in the lobby. All of them are orks.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	3	3	5	2	1	3	2	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 3, Social 4
Armor	10
Skills	Blades 4, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Intimidation 4, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 2
Qualities	Home Ground
Gear	Armor vest, Meta Link commlink, 1 dose of jazz
Weapons	Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistol, Accuracy 5(6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10(c)] Forearm snap-blades [Blade, Acc 4, Reach —, DV 7P, AP –2]

SCENE 3: LYING DOWN ON THE JOB

SCAN THIS

This scene is less a discrete scene and more a transitional piece of connective tissue between the previous scene and the next one. It provides a place to compile all of the actions the PCs could take with the commlink that would motivate the subsequent leg of the adventure. This scene is best used in concert with the **Contacts, Legwork**, and **Searching The Matrix** sections on p. 51.

Since this scene takes place at one or more runners' dosses and/or the place(s) of business of the runners' contact(s), there is no **Places of Interest** entry for this chapter, nor any **Grunts and Moving Targets**. Relatedly, the **Tell It To Them Straight** section here may have to be significantly modified depending on how much interest the PCs show in the commlink, and where and when they look at it.

In this scene, the runners begin to research the second commlink they took off of Oxycode's body, and, realizing it's valuable, start looking for a buyer. Conversely, word that the runners have the commlink begins leaking out to operators on the street who are looking to procure it, or get it back.

This is also a scene for the runners to rest up, reload, and buy gear before the next scene, particularly if they used up any expendable equipment, got hurt, or made enough money for an equipment upgrade in the previous scene. You'll want them fresh and rested for the punishment that's coming.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Mysterious objects, no matter how small, have a certain gravity, like tiny, super-dense planets. They have a way of drawing the eye, and drawing the hand. This is certainly true of the matte black, lime-green trimmed Hermes Ikon commlink sitting on top of the hefty, soykaf-stained stack of unpaid bills on your kitchen counter. Even the least tech savvy of you have been tempted to pick it up, fidget with it, try to understand its mysteries. Not just out of idle curiosity—Mr. Johnson said it might be valuable, but not to him. That means it might be valuable *and* dangerous, a combination that makes you want to turn into a way to pay those bills, and fast. The first step is finding a buyer. But how?

HOOKS

The runners gotta eat. They gotta pay for their music subscription fees, their grid access, their lights and heat, the roof over their heads. And they want to pay for bigger guns, more ammo, better cyberware, new spells, and so on. The last job didn't pay that great, and even if the runners are only maintaining Low or Squatter level lifestyles, they're probably hungry for more. The commlink could be a washout or a bust, could be a trap, but it could also be their ticket to a bigger payday. And they will never know if they do not try.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The runners have three interconnected ways they can investigate the mysterious commlink. Most likely, they will want to use a combination of all three approaches, with each approach playing into the others, until they learn enough to advance to the next scene. Their options are *Talking To Their Contacts* (legwork), *Analyzing The Commlink*, and *Wardialing* (calling random numbers on the commlink). *Digital Sharks and Blood In The Water* describes how to figure out what happens next as a result of exercising these options.

ANALYZING THE COMMLINK

When the PCs first get their hands on the commlink, it is completely unlocked, and they have free access to the information on it. However, if a Matrix character analyzing the commlink in detail scores three successes on a Matrix Perception Test (Computer + Intuition [Data Processing]; ordinarily a Matrix Perception Test is a Standard Action, but this one takes one hour), they notice a second, hidden device built into the commlink. This acts like a separate device, and therefore must be hacked. It has a Device Rating of 5.

All of the data on this second meta-device is both *encrypted* and *fragmented* (see below). To crack the file protection, a Matrix character must first acquire a mark on the device with a successful Brute Force (Cybercombat + Logic [Attack]) or Hack On The Fly (Hacking + Logic [Sleaze]) action against the device's dice pool of 10. If the hacker goes with the Sleaze approach, the device can accumulate marks on him, but those marks have no effect; the commlink has no protocol for alerting its owner, Seth Dietrich, of the intrusion.

When the Matrix specialist successfully acquires a mark on the device, he can then attempt a Crack File action to access the protected files. The Matrix specialist rolls Hacking + Logic [Attack] versus the twice the protection rating (a dice pool of 10). Once a decker manages to crack the file protection, all that is necessary is a successful Edit File action to download/copy/read it. Edit File requires them to achieve a net success on a Computer + Logic [Data Processing] roll versus a dice pool of (you guessed it) 10.

During the time that the Matrix specialist is tampering with the commlink, pay careful attention to their Overwatch Score. If it hits 40, Convergence happens as described on p. 231 of *SR5*, and the Matrix character is proper fucked. However, in this special case, if the OS reaches even 20, other things happen. Namely, Ares and Mitsuhama company men are alerted that someone has found Seth Dietrich's commlink (see below)—a commlink they are very interested in.

An alternative option is for a hardware specialist to repossess the device with an Extended Hardware + Logic [Mental] (24, 1 hour) test. However, even if a character goes to all the trouble of making themselves the commlink's official owner, they still have to crack the file protection normally, as described above.

Once they crack the file, they find that it is badly damaged and garbled. The reason is that it was actually not just encrypted, but fragmentary. The rest of the file is held on

another system, and only when both files are reunited can it be repaired and read. Only parts of it are readable, giving the PCs scant clues (which will hopefully help them with their legwork). Give the PCs the fragments of data on Handout #1. The key phrase for them to remember here is Operation Daybreak, which appears on one of the file fragments. The file also contains what can be correctly identified as the name of the commlink's owner: Seth Dietrich.

Once these fragmentary files are downloaded, nothing else can be discerned from the commlink using technical skills until the second half of the file is found. A character who manages to crack and download the file is skilled enough to know that it's missing about half of its total data, and should be told this.

TALKING TO THEIR CONTACTS

If the runners just have a mysterious commlink, with no names associated with its owner or any of the contacts in its address book, that is not much for their contacts to go on. It won't provide useful results with Legwork or a Matrix Search. Legwork and Matrix Searches on the keywords Seth Dietrich or Operation Daybreak will be much more fruitful.

Without those keywords, tech savvy or just greedy contacts will offer to buy the Hermes Ikon off of the runners for 3,000 nuyen, the book value of a commlink of that make and model (contacts with lower loyalty than 4 will offer only a fraction of that, i.e. one or two thousand nuyen). Making this offer, the contacts are figuring that the worst-case scenario is that they just bought a decent-quality extra commlink: any paydata on it is a bonus.

While this may seem like a good initial offer, if the runners jump on it, not only do they miss out on a chance to make a *lot* more money, but the contact will almost certainly wind up dead. If the contact has a Connection Rating of 5 or 6, they're safe, but if their Connection Rating is 4 or lower, they turn up dead in a few days, geeked in a robbery. If the runners have some idea what the commlink contains, they can haggle for a better offer, and avoid unwittingly killing off one of their contacts (once a contact has some idea what's on the commlink, they'll be eager to help the runners turn it around for a finder's fee, but they don't want to be the one sucking the live hand grenade when it goes off, no matter how much orichalcum it's coated in).

For more detail on what information the runners can get from talking to appropriate contacts, see the **Legwork** section on p. 52. However, more is going on in this scene than the runners pumping their contacts for information. Be sure and roleplay these interactions, characterizing the runners' contacts, rather than just hastily paraphrasing the information in the Legwork section.

CORPORATE CONTACTS

A Mr. Johnson, fixer, or similar corporate contact (the key Knowledge skills to look for are Corporate Rumors and similar skills) with a Loyalty of 3 or less, if told that the runners have a commlink that once belonged to a Seth Dietrich, will immediately sell that information to Ares or Mitsuhama (whichever they have a better relationship with) for a finder's fee. They don't want to split that finder's fee with the runners. If their Loyalty is 5 or higher, then they will pass along the information of what the commlink's worth, along with an offer to arrange for whoever they contacted to buy it. They'll also take care to warn the runners just how deadly what they're playing with is. With Loyalty 4 contacts, the gamemaster has to carefully weigh previous roleplaying and characterization and split the difference. A buddy won't outright screw the PCs unless he has to, but that's a lot of money on the table. Possible developments for a Loyalty 4 contact is to try to buy the commlink from the PCs for a relatively high price like 10,000 nuyen, only to sell it for twice that, or to offer to help the PCs find a buyer for a solid percentage, but betray them to the prospective buyer if they refuse or double cross him.

STREET CONTACTS

A street contact (such as the Bartender, or any character with a knowledge skill such as Street Rumors at high levels) can provide the information outlined in the Legwork section. Regardless of their loyalty, this type of character won't betray the runners, but neither can they set up a buyer. The two are related. Street-level contacts don't have access to contacts of their own in the relevant factions and are just as scared of the runners geeking them as they are of Mitsuhama. These contacts are good for information only, as described on p. 52.

CRIMINAL CONTACTS

A high-level criminal contact (such as the Mafia Consiglieri, or any character with high levels of Knowledge skills such as Local Politics) will function in a similar manner to a corporate contact, albeit from a different slant. If their loyalty is 3 or lower, they will set the runners up for a fall, selling the location of the commlink to Ares (if they are in the Mafia or Vory) or to Mitsuhama (if they are in an Asian syndicate, i.e. a Yakuza wakagashira, Triad Incense Master, and so on). Note that the connection between the contact and the buyer needn't be cut and dry. A Triad Incense Master might know someone in Wuxing who knows that Wuxing isn't after the data, but Mitsuhama is. Likewise, a Vory character might go through their contacts in Evo to get to Ares. But Ares is *directly* using the Seattle Mafia to hunt for this commlink, and Mitsuhama is *directly* employing the Seattle Yakuza. If the criminal underboss/advisor contact has a Loyalty rating of 4 or higher, they will provide the runners with the info in the Legwork section and offer to arrange a buyer, for a broker's fee. They will not betray the runners, unless they come under direct pressure from Brackhaven, Mitsuhama, Ares, or the like; even then Loyalty 5 Contacts will warn the runners in advance, and Loyalty 6 Contacts will *never* screw over their friends.

LAW-ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS

Law-enforcement contacts (such as the Beat Cop, or any contact with high levels of knowledge skills like Law Enforcement) can provide some information (once again, see the Legwork section). They have some idea of who Seth

Dietrich was and what he was working on. If these contacts have a Loyalty of 3 or less, they'll get attempt to get in contact with Dietrich through the FBI as soon as the runners hang up. If their Loyalty is 4 or more, they'll do the same, but on the PCs' behalf: they'll offer to contact Dietrich so he can buy his commlink back from the runners. This, along with some of the threads in *Wardialing* below, leads directly into **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door**.

OTHER CONTACTS

Magical, medical, and mechanical contacts (like the Talismonger, Street Doc, and Mechanic) can't help the runners out much with this one. They just don't have the right connections. On the plus side, they will no doubt be very useful in other parts of the adventure, and they can't betray the runners here, regardless of loyalty.

Depending on how many contacts the runners talk to, and the Loyalty of those contacts, they could wind up tipping off Ares, Mitsuhama, and Seth Dietrich here, in rapid succession. All of these things will have consequences in later scenes, so keep track.

If the PCs were betrayed by a contact, at the end of the adventure, the PC should be refunded the entire Karma cost of the contact as bonus Karma. Later adventures can and should revolve around the contact attempting to tie up loose ends, or the runners attempting to get revenge. Betrayal happens in the shadows, chummer, and it's never pretty.

WARDIALING

The runners don't necessarily need any contacts or combat skills to just start dialing every single number on the damn thing, looking for a bite. This is a marginally dumb idea, but that doesn't mean the gamemaster should discourage it. A seemingly dumb idea that gets the action moving is actually a good idea. Besides, doing this from the comfort of the runners' safe house, or even a public place, is far smarter than stopping to do it immediately after picking the stolen commlink up at a crime scene.

Nearly all of the anonymized numbers in the address book are non-answers. In truth, they've been disconnected. These are smart, wary people, most of them verging on (or outright vaulting over) the ragged edge of paranoia. They cycle their commlinks regularly, buying throwaways and spoofing their main lines frequently. Therefore any attempts to trace them through the Matrix (using the Trace Icon Matrix Action, for example) automatically fail. However, as soon as the runners dial any of these numbers, two things happen.

The first thing is that Kenneth Brackhaven's shadow operatives are monitoring Dietrich's commlink; it's one reason he's no longer using it (although he didn't mean to leave it at Oxycode's place; that was his cognitive fragmentation disorder kicking in). This means as soon as it makes any outgoing calls, Brackhaven's people start tracing it. For dramatic purposes, the runners have no way of detecting or stopping this: if they continuously reboot, spoof, or just remove the battery from the commlink, Brackhaven finds them anyway by the extensive resources he has available. The clock/countdown on this can and should be fudged to accommodate the story's pacing and dramatic sense, but as a baseline, it will take forty-eight hours for Brackhaven's people to find them once they lose contact with Dietrich's commlink.

The second thing that can happen is that one of the unseen contacts of Seth Dietrich the runners tried to call will contact Dietrich through secure channels and warn him that someone has his old commlink. This will directly lead to **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door**, in which Dietrich will try to contact the runners to arrange to buy his commlink back. And also in which others will contact the runners, and will not ask as nicely.

There is one number in the commlink, however, that *will* answer, after a long list of dead ends. When that happens, read or paraphrase the following:

> *After three or four rings, you think it's yet another dead end. Then a gruff, but young, male voice answers. "You motherfucker, you better be dead," the voice snarls. "Disappearing off the deep end just when we need you most! Good for nothing G-man slot? Hello? Hello?"*

The voice belongs to Tauren, an ork hacker and shadowrunner who's politically associated with Project Freedom and the Ork Underground movement. Tauren is a skilled decker who is the son of the legendarily talented, old, and cranky ork decker William "Bull" MacCallister. Runners can roll appropriate knowledge skills to see if they recognize him, by voice, name, or punked-out ork icon. When the runners explain who they are (namely, that they *aren't* Seth Dietrich), and how they got the commlink, Tauren calms down, but not much. "Do you have any idea what you're sitting on?" he asks. The runners can try to bluff, or come clean that they haven't much of a clue. Either way, he says, "Listen, I gotta make some calls. Don't go anywhere, don't lose that thing, and whatever you do, *watch your backs*! If you can hold onto that thing for a little while, I know some people who might be willing to buy it off you. I've gotta see about getting the nuyen together, though."

If asked who he represents, Tauren will likely spill the beans without too much pressure. He's pulling for Project Freedom, and is working closely with Eliza Bloom (see p. 57), other underground organizers and (embarrassingly), his dad, Bull. They want to see Kenneth Brackhaven go down, and they think that Dietrich might have uncovered enough evidence to slam dunk him straight to hell. Obviously (from his manner of answering), Tauren hadn't heard from Dietrich in so long he thought he was dead. Now that the runners still have Dietrich's commlink, Tauren thinks that Dietrich is dead more than ever. He wants to scoop up the commlink before anyone else does, and he warns the runners that Brackhaven's people are probably looking for it.

DIGITAL SHARKS AND BLOOD IN THE WATER: A SUMMARY

To review, if the runners spoke to any Corporate or Criminal contacts during their legwork, then Ares, Mitsuhama, or

both may be aware they have the commlink, depending on their contacts' connections. If they worked up an OS score of 20 or more when hacking into the commlink, then Ares and Mitsuhama are *both* aware.

If the runners spoke with a law enforcement contact, or tried to call *any* of Dietrich's contacts, then Dietrich himself is aware the runners have his commlink, and you can proceed to Scene 4. If the runners tried to call *any* of Dietrich's contacts, then Kenneth Brackhaven's operatives are aware of the commlink, and actively tracking it down. Finally, if the runners spoke with Tauren, then he also knows they have Dietrich's commlink, and possibly the data that was on it, and so do his cohorts in Project Freedom.

The important thing to keep track of here is which of these factions (besides Dietrich himself) *first* learned that the runners had the commlink. That will heavily impact the way that **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door** plays out. Meanwhile, it is Dietrich finding out that actually triggers Scene 4 happening.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

The best way to make this scene harder/scarier is so insidious the PCs won't even notice it until late. If you really want to be cruel, you can make the PCs' contacts more likely to betray them. A better option, though, is to make the contacts that betray them do so more thoroughly. For example, a Loyalty 3, Connection 3 fixer who decides to sell the PCs out to Ares for a profit doesn't just tell Ares that the PCs have the commlink and where they live, he sells them an in-depth breakdown on the PCs' combat capabilities so that the Ares strike team can capitalize on and neutralize them later on.

Likewise, you can make the PCs' lives harder by having contacts that have already betrayed them betray them to multiple factions. For instance, perhaps a Mob Consiglieri (Loyalty 2, Connection 5) sells the PCs out to Ares, but then also turns around to sell them out to Brackhaven through his contacts in Humanis. He gets to get paid twice, and if the Ares and Brackhaven teams wind up killing each other in their scramble to get the PCs and the commlink, he won't exactly be shedding any tears for them atop his mountain of nuyen.

DEBUGGING

There are two ways this scene can go wrong. One is that the runners simply do nothing with the commlink, forget about it, ignore it, sell it cheaply, or don't figure out how to investigate it closely enough to find a buyer. In the event of this, there's not much a gamemaster can do except provide the PCs with increasingly less and less subtle hints on how to proceed, until their butts are sufficiently in gear.

The second thing that can go wrong is if the PCs have a bunch of low loyalty contacts that all choose to sell them out upon learning about the commlink, their hacker gets a high overwatch score, they call every single number on the commlink twice until there's no possible doubt Brackhaven's people have tracked them, and so on. If this happens, let it. The more factions that come gunning for the PCs later, the greater the chaos, and the more fun the chase. Remember, multiple factions converging on the PCs won't actually make things harder, because the factions will be taking pot shots at each other too, and can be played off each other. Multiple betrayals also allow for a whodunit later in the adventure, with the PCs trying to figure out which (if any) of their contacts sold them out. Even if the real answer is "all of them," they should only catch one culprit so that they do not lose all their contacts in one fell swoop.

SCENE 4: A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

SCAN THIS

In this scene, Seth Dietrich reaches out to the runners. He has been tipped off by his contacts that they have his commlink, and he needs it back. He cannot allow it to fall into the wrong hands (namely Brackhaven's), as that would put all of his contacts in danger. In what is, distressingly, one of his increasingly rare moments of lucidity, Dietrich calls his old commlink just before midnight. He tries to arrange to buy it from the runners at a meet the next day (**Scene 5: Caveat Venditor**), and he is the first party to make a serious cash offer.

This scene is triggered by the PCs either calling any of the numbers on the commlink or attempting to inquire about Dietrich through law enforcement contacts.

There's more going on here than the runners getting a phone call, however. Moments after they hang up with Dietrich and get everyone together to discuss the offer, a strike team kicks down the door of their safehouse. The strike team might be mob muscle sent by Ares, Yakuza thugs working for Mitsuhama, Tosh Athack and his anti-gang task force, or a pack of Night Hunters, viciously racist, augmentation-addicted gangers sent by Brackhaven through his contacts in Humanis. Either way, the runners will have to pull out all the stops just to survive.

This scene does not have a **Places of Interest** section: it happens entirely on the runners' home turf, wherever that may be.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

The digital readout in the lower left corner of your vision says five minutes to midnight when you hear an unfamiliar ringtone, and the thrum of a vibrating commlink. A glance in the direction of the stolen Hermes Ikon reveals it jittering its way along the counter top with each pulse of vibration. The call comes from a restricted commcode; your curiosity gets the better of you before it stops ringing, and you seize the chirping, buzzing 'link and answer.

"This is Special Agent Seth Dietrich," a man's voice says. He sounds tired and tense. "I believe you have something of mine. Actually, I'm absolutely sure of it. I want it back." Dietrich's words are rapid, as though he's eager to have his business done and be off the line as soon as possible. "Believe me, I know that in this city, possession is eleven tenths of the

law. I'll pay. A hundred thousand nuyen, no questions asked. Meet me tomorrow afternoon, 1500 hours, at the zoo in Fort Lewis. The basilisk exhibit. Bring the commlink, I'll have the cash on me." If you have no pressing questions, he hangs up as soon as possible.

You'd better dial up your chummers, this is the kind of thing the whole group should discuss, and you haven't got much time to plan.

HOOKS

This scene is where the hooks and clues from the last scene finally begin to coalesce into a greater mystery. Dietrich is desperate, he's a crusader, and he's willing to pay; in other words, he has something to offer every runner, from the most idealistic to the most mercenary. The raid that's about to happen will be fast, brutal, and deadly. The runners will have to give it their all just to survive, and the players should be on the edge of their seats as things explode into violence with startling speed. Pull out all the stops and amp up the surprise and intensity when the attack on their doss begins. A blistering firefight and a skin-of-the-teeth escape should follow. In the end, the runners will rightfully be left wondering whom among their contacts they can trust.

BEHIND THE SCENES

You will want to paraphrase and modify the above text depending on who has the commlink, where they physically have it stashed (it may, for instance, be held on the character's person), where they live, who's there at the time, and so on. Whether or not the runners have hacked the commlink and learned Dietrich's name is also an important factor; as written, the text above assumes the runners know his name, since it's difficult (but by no means impossible) to arrive at this scene without first scumming Dietrich's name from the commlinks memory.

Dietrich is calling from a public telecom in Renton, just outside the Auburn Center, an aging mall for the lower classes. It won't be terribly difficult for a skilled hacker to trace his call, if they happen to be holding on to the commlink when Dietrich calls. By the time the runners are there, however, Dietrich is long gone, leaving no trace whatsoever of his presence. He's under enormous stresses and battling against his splintered state, but while Dietrich is lucid his tradecraft is rock solid, and he will not make it easy for the runners to double cross him.

Give the runners time to meet up at one of their safehouses or a public place (again, this scene will play out differently depending on where it happens) to discuss Dietrich's offer. Once all of the PCs are there, read or paraphrase one of the following prepared text sections based on who learned they had the commlink first: Ares, Mitsuhama, Brackhaven, or Tauren. All of the following prepared text assumes that the runners are all assembled at a safehouse located on in an apartment building, and not on the first floor. If the location or number of runners changes, you should alter the prepared text accordingly to avoid confusion.

IF ARES FOUND OUT THE RUNNERS HAD THE COMMLINK FIRST:

There's a loud CRACK as the front door comes crashing in off its hinges. A frantic glance in that direction reveals a big Italian norm, standing boldly in the fatal funnel, equally crawling with heavy-duty cyber augmentations and gold jewelry. "Knock, knock," he smirks. Then you hear the tinkling of broken glass and the roar of flames as someone outside begins lobbing incendiary grenades at the windows, and two thugs with submachine guns rush in past the chromed figure.

IF MITSUHAMA FOUND OUT THE RUNNERS HAD THE COMMLINK FIRST:

Out of nowhere, several of the windows explode inwards, black cat-suited figures rolling into the apartment in a spray of broken glass. They snap gracefully to their feet, wicked-looking blades and silenced SMGs in hand.

IF BRACKHAVEN FOUND OUT THE RUNNERS HAD THE COMMLINK FIRST:

There is a knock at the door. [One of the runners] goes to answer, looking out the peephole, one hand on the securely bolted door lock. You register the sound of running footsteps microseconds before your eye aligns with the peephole, along with shrill, insane giggling; you see a baseball-sized object rolling around in the hallway just outside the door. Just as you realize it's a live frag grenade, it goes off.

IF TAUREN FOUND OUT THE RUNNERS HAD THE COMMLINK FIRST:

BANG! The windows smash inwards, the metal cylinders thrown through them bouncing and skittering before they blow out at both ends, flooding the room with wide spumes of noxious green tear gas. At the same second, with flawless timing, a battering ram hits the front door, with troll strength behind it; the door shivers as its hinges crack apart.

SHOCK AND AWE, PART I

The four factions that could potentially be the first to assail the runners have widely divergent styles and tactics. This section is your guide to running the combat, which will play out dramatically differently not just depending on where it happens, but also on who the runners are under attack from. If the runners run into any of these assault teams later in the adventure, you can refer back here for a general summary of their tactics.

THE ARES-BACKED MAFIA CREW

The Mafia crew are all made guys, directly under the command of Ciarniello family *capo* Caesar "Chrome" Ciarniello, also next in line to become that family's Don. Caesar is too

important to the family to die here, and he knows it. He'll retreat after taking more than a few boxes of damage. On the other hand, he is a cybered-to-the-gills killing machine, and he knows that too. Of all the strike forces, the Mafia team is most reliant on straightforward combat muscles. Caesar breaks the front door down with his enhanced cyberarms, and then steps back for his *soldatos* to mop up, only returning fire if fired upon; he has enough cyberware and armor to shrug off a fair volume of small-arms fire. Two foot soldiers with submachine guns rush the front doors with Caesar. The other four goons initially stay outside by the two GMC Cadillac Nocturnes the crew arrived in, lobbing incendiary grenades at the windows (Threshold 3) first, and then peppering the place with automatic weapons fire. They have been told not to risk destroying the commlink at all costs, but sometimes they get a little too excited in the heat of battle and forget that instruction. The Mafia goons won't stick around to fight it out for more than five turns. They're well aware of Knight Errant response time in the area, and they want to avoid getting picked up.

THE MITSUHAMA-BACKED YAKUZA CREW

The Shotozumi-gumi Yakuza strike force will take a ninja approach here, rappelling down from the roof or using similar tactics. They try to come in through the windows with the element of surprise on their side and use their katanas or automatic weapons, whichever seems more appropriate. If they use automatic weapons, they stick to short, controlled bursts to avoid destroying what they're there for. The team leader, Shinji Kajio, is a *kenjutsu*-focused adept; he will try to identify any street samurai among the PCs, and engage them in mano-a-mano melee combat. There are five Yakuza soldiers besides Shinji. Like the Mafia, the Yakuza will leave after five turns of combat, if things are not progressing well.

BRACKHAVEN'S NIGHT HUNTERS

The Night Hunters are crazy to a man, and they fight like it. Unfortunately, their lack of strategic finesse is little comfort to the PCs, since they are also heavily augmented, dangerous combatants. After blowing the door with a fragmentation grenade as described above, they rush in with their cyber-implant weapons and attempt to mob the PCs with wolf-pack tactics. They are acutely aware they have no magical support, so they rush in to close quarters quickly to prevent being targeted all at once by an area spell. They wade into combat, slashing and stabbing madly around them, cackling all the while, focusing on the weakest characters first—unless any of the PCs are metahumans. The Night Hunters always go for metas first: trolls, then obvious dwarfs and orks, then elves. Characters with the Human Looking quality don't draw any special aggression from them. Their leader is the hacker Bios-Fear, who will wait just outside of the fray, but within one hundred meters of the action. From there, he tries to lock onto and disable all of the PCs' devices, implants, and cybernetics; he especially enjoys bricking his enemy's cyberlimbs, weapons, and optics, using his Fork program and the Data Spike action to their fullest. The Night Hunters will fight to the death; they are not afraid of the police. It should be obvious from the outset that they will show no mercy to PCs that surrender. There are two Night Hunters for every PC, not counting Bios-Fear.

DANA OAKS' ANTI-GANG TASK FORCE

The Anti-Gang Task Force members are the most dangerous enemies the PCs can face here. While they are the least numerous (just Tosh, a mage, and two other members), they are the only ones with magical support: more important, each one of them is at least the equal of any PC, and they are experienced masters of overwhelming shock and awe tactics. Their only major weakness is that they are not here with official police support and backup; District Attorney Oaks, who sent them after a conversation with Eliza Bloom, who heard about the commlink from Tauren, worries (correctly) that Brackhaven has high-level plants within Knight Errant. The Task Force only has the four of them there. They will not fight to the death, sparing the PCs if they win, and withdrawing if any of them is seriously wounded.

The Anti-Gang Task Force fights smart. First they throw in tear gas (each of them has a gas mask), then Tosh hammers down the door with a battering ram himself, and then the KE team member with him throws in flash-bang grenades to further disorient the PCs. The other two attempt to breach through a back or side entrance, putting the PCs in a pincer. They attempt to use unarmed, close-range takedowns and non-lethal weapons to quickly, quietly subdue the PCs who, they hope, are still blinded/deafened/shocked by the rapid-fire tear gas and flash bangs.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

However tempting it may be, do not make this scene more difficult by adding more and better guns or other forces to the enemy teams. Instead, focus on the fact that the PCs are caught off guard. By default, after you read the prepared text, this combat encounter allows the PCs to roll initiative normally. However, as the PCs are sitting around in their safehouse (or wherever, really) and not expecting an imminent attack, you can call for a Surprise Test instead. PCs that fail the Surprise Test will be unable to act in the first round of combat, giving the opposition an important advantage. Characters capable of detecting the approaching strike team with a Perception Test (much easier for the Night Hunters and Mafia than for the Yakuza and the Task Force) should receive a bonus on their Surprise Test, as normal.

Finally, if you really want to be harsh, meticulously catalogue all of the weapons and armor the PCs have on them when this scene starts, and stick to it. This scene assumes one of the PCs was at home (more likely in their underwear or pajamas than in full tactical gear) and the rest were called in the middle of the night to join them. If you enforce realism and comfort here, it is very unlikely the PCs are tooled up for battle. Be very careful about pushing the envelope in this way, however. Unarmed PCs may have nothing to do, while unarmored PCs have a tendency to go down like paper targets at a shooting range.

DEBUGGING

There's a few ways this scene can go wrong. The more serious possibility is that the PCs are reluctant to meet up after the initial phone call (if your PCs are so paranoid or incurious that they don't want to answer the mysterious ringing commlink at all, a Debugging section probably can't help them). Ironically, this caution may actually cause the PCs to get screwed over, hard. If the PC with the commlink is alone when the strike team arrives, it is very unlikely they'll be able to mount anything resembling an effective defense. If the PCs are hesitant about putting all their proverbial eggs in one basket, try to subtly remind them that there really is safety in numbers. If nothing else, well-worn axioms, phased as imperatives, about the wisdom (or, to the point, the lack thereof) of dividing the party in tabletop roleplaying games come to mind here.

The more common situation here is if the assault force is simply too strong for the PCs. Hey, it happens. These enemies aren't *that* numerous, and aren't *that* powerful, but they have the element of surprise over the PCs, and even if you don't choose to push the envelope, the players are confined by the reality that they don't have their best gear with them, or anything resembling a plan. Also, to make matters worse, dice luck may go against the PCs. If this happens, the best way to fix it is actually to add more enemies.

Wait, what? Stay with us here. By having a second team hit the PCs place of residence moments after the first one—perhaps they were quietly surveilling the PCs, and forced to make their move when the shit hit the fan—you can provide a breath of relief for the runners as the two enemy strike teams exchange shots with each other, giving the runners just enough breathing room to escape.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

CAESAR "CHROME" CIARNIELLO

MALE HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5	3 (5)	4 (6)	4 (7)	4	3	4	1	5	1.68

Initiative	8 +1D6 (10 + 3D6)
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6 (9), Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Con 4, Intimidation 6, Longarms (Shotguns) 4 (+2), Negotiation 3, Palming 2, Pilot Groundcraft 3, Pistols (Revolvers) 4 (+2), Sneaking 2, Unarmed Combat 6
Qualities	Guts, Home Ground, Prejudice (biased, metahumans), Prejudice (biased, non-Italians), Prejudice (biased, women), Toughness
Augmentations	All alphaware: 2 cyberarms [gold-plated, obvious, advanced (Rating 3) w/ Agility Enhancement 2, Armor 2, Strength Enhancement 3], cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ chrome protective covers, flare compensation, low-light vision, image link, smartlink], dermal plating 2, wired reflexes 2
Gear	Actioneer business suit (w/ Fire Resistance 3, Nonconductivity 3), Erika Elite commlink
Weapons	Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4 (6), DV 13P, AP –1, SA/BF, RC —, w/ external smartgun system] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 10P, AP –3, SS, RC —, w/ explosive rounds and external smartgun system]

Note: Caesar's dice pool for a punch with one of his cyberarms is 11. The base damage of a punch from one of his cyberarms is 7P.

Caesar "Chrome" Ciarnellio is a cybered-up dinosaur, a relic from another era. He's loud, brash, rude, crude, and sexist. He thinks he's untouchable, and to a disturbing degree, he's right. His father's name and rank as Don of the Ciarniello crime organization offers him substantial political protection from all the players in the Seattle underworld except the most suicidal. And everyone who's not in-the-know enough to be aware of who he is tends to be dissuaded by the fact that he has enough cyberware to rip people in half with his bare hands and harmlessly absorb small-arms fire. Those who fail to be dissuaded by these facts tend to wind up dead.

Caesar's elderly father, Vince "Numbers" Ciarniello, styled his entire life around a rejection of Mafia stereotypes. He was prudent, subtle, dispassionate, precise, and cautious. As is often the case with the generational merry-go-round, Caesar has no interest in being anything like his father. As the father has grown older and more sickly, the reins he's kept on Caesar have grown looser and looser. Caesar is a loose cannon with a lot to prove, and he thoroughly enjoys hurting people. Few in the Ciarniello family respect him, but all of them fear him. He didn't mastermind the tenuous, but important, connections the Ciarnellos have to Ares. His father's congsiglieri, Ronald Eccolatti, arranged for that to happen, having got his hooks into a senior manager at Ares. Caesar is just riding along because this is where the action is, and he likes action.

CIARNIELLO FAMILY SOLDIERS

PROFESSIONAL RATING 4								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	9
Skills	Automatics (SMGs) 3 (+2), Clubs 3, Intimidation 5, Longarms 2, Pistols 2, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 3
Qualities	Guts
Gear	Lined coat, Sony Emperor commlink
Weapons	Baseball bat [Club, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP —] Colt Cobra TZ–120 [SMG, Acc 4 (5), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC 2(3), w/ folding stock, gas-vent 2, laser sight] 2 petrol bombs [Grenades, DV 10P (Fire), AP –2, Blast –2/m]

Note: Their petrol bombs detonate immediately on impact, and generate smoke like smoke grenades as well as causing Fire damage to those in Blast range.

SHINJI KAJIO

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	EDG	ESS
3	6	5 (6)	5	4	3	4	3	4	3	6

Initiative	9 (10) + 2D6
Condition Monitor	10 / 10
Limits	Physical 6 (7), Mental 5, Social 6
Armor	10
Skills	Athletics skill group 4, Blades (Swords) 6 (8) (+2), Etiquette 5, Sneaking 4, Influence skill group 3, Perception 4 (6), Pilot Ground Craft 3, Unarmed Combat 4
Qualities	Allergy (Pollutants, Mild), Ambidextrous, Mentor Spirit (Eagle), Prejudiced (Biased, non-Japanese)
Adept Powers	Combat Sense Level 3, Improved Ability (Blades) 2, Improved Reflexes 1, Mystic Armor 1
Gear	Contacts [Rating 2, w/ low-light, image link], lined coat, Renraku Sensei commlink
Weapons	Katana [Blade, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 8P, AP –3] Wakizashi [Blade, Acc 8, Reach 1, DV 8P, AP –2]

Shinji Kajio is the polar opposite of Chrome in every way. He's humble, modest, and taciturn; he's small and slight, soft spoken and gentle looking, with a definitely effeminate sort of prettiness. He is deferential to superiors and polite to underlings, and he knows when to keep his opinions and prejudices to himself. Almost no one has seen him angry, and even when killing he displays only a compassionate sadness. Technically, Shinji is just a street-level soldier. However, his superlatively good manners and equally exceptional skill with a blade have him on the fast track to promotion. Shinji is old fashioned in the extreme, even by Shotozumi-gumi standards. Not only does he respect Yakuza traditions more than nearly anyone else in the organization, he disdains firearms, preferring to use his swords in all situations, no matter how advantageous picking up a gun might be.

SHOTOZUMI GUMI NINJA

PROFESSIONAL RATING 4								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
3	5 (6)	4 (6)	2 (3)	3	3	4	3	4.4

Initiative	8 + 1D6 (10 + 1D6)
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	10
Skills	Automatics 4, Blades 4, Gymnastics 3, Intimidation 3, Sneaking 3 (5), Unarmed Combat 4
Qualities	[illegible]
Augmentations	Muscle replacement 1, reaction enhancers 2
Gear	Black Urban Explorer Jumpsuit, goggles [Capacity 4, w/ image link, low-light vision, smartlink], Renraku Sensei commlink
Weapons	Katana [Blade, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP –3] SCK Model 100 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 8P, AP —, SA/BF, RC (1) w/ folding stock, internal smartlink, suppressor]

Oyabun Hanzo Shotozumi has guided his association, and the Seattle Yakuza, for decades. Shotozumi is a traditionalist and a firm believer in doing things the way the Yakuza have done them for centuries, so his organization maintains practices like *irezumi* tattoos to demonstrate their rank and influence (the very best done by traditional master artists without the use of modern tools). Members of the *gumi* are expected to atone for their mistakes with traditional *yabitsume* ("finger-cutting") and *seppuku* rituals.

The Shotozumi-*gumi* is organized and run like a business association, with the *oyabun* as its chairman. They combine the traditional Yakuza practice of offering their benevolent protection to residents of their *nawabari* (literally "roped-off area," mainly the International District of Downtown) with the *sokaiya* practice of dealing with local corporations and Seattle offices of multinationals. Essentially, the corps pay the Yakuza protection money to avoid disruptions of their business affairs and to smooth certain underworld connections. Closer to the street, the Shotozumi have interests in gambling parlors and "entertainment" services like prostitution (both traditional *geisha* and their *bunraku* parlors), chip-dealing, and smuggling.

BIOS-FEAR

MALE HUMAN

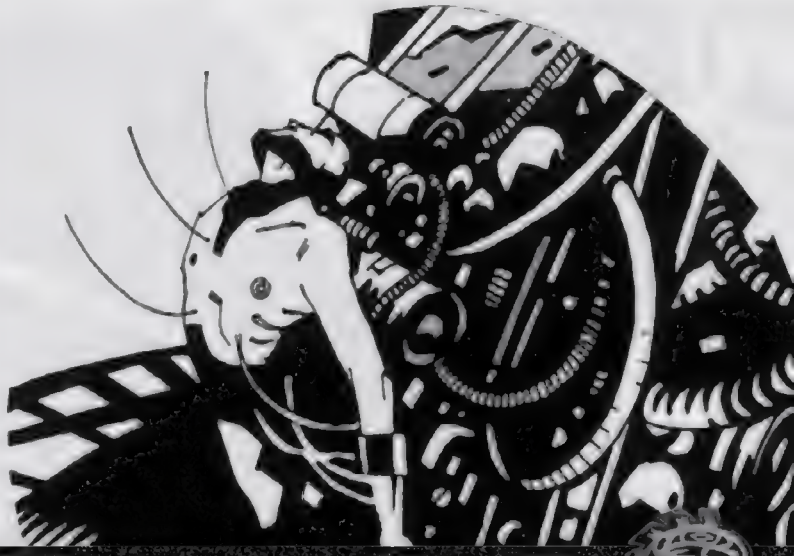
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
4	4 (5)	4 (6)	2 (5)	3	4 (6)	5	4	2	1

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (12 + 2D6)
Condition Monitor	10 / 10
Limits	Physical 4 (7), Mental 6 (7), Social 4
Armor	12
Skills	Blades 1, Cybercombat 6, Electronics skill group 4, Electronic Warfare 3, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Hacking 4, Leadership 3, Pistols (Sliverguns) 3 (+2), Unarmed Combat (Cyber-Implant Weapons) 2 (+2)
Qualities	Addiction (Severe, Psyche), Addiction (Moderate, Hate/Rage Inducing BTL Moodchips), Codeslinger (Data Spike), Combat Paralysis (meat world only), Prejudice (radical, metahumans)
Augmentations	Cerebral booster 2, cyberears [Rating 2, w/ audio enhancement 2, select sound filter 4, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2, vision magnification], datajack x 3, cyberarm [right, obvious, w/ Agility Enhancement 2, Strength Enhancement 2, Shock Hand (Acc Physical, Reach —, DV 8S(e), AP –5) and integral cyberdeck], reaction enhancers 2, wired reflexes 1
Cyberdeck	Customized Novatech Navigator (built into cyberarm w/ default setting: Attack 6, Firewall 5, Data Processing 4, Sleaze 3)
Programs Loaded	Biofeedback, Hammer, Exploit
	Gear: Armor jacket, Renraku Sensei commlink, assorted BTL chips
Gear	Armor jacket, Renraku Sensei commlink, assorted BTL chips
Weapons	Ares Viper Slivergun [Heavy Pistol, Acc 4 (6), DV 9P(f), AP +4, SA/BF, RC —, w/ external smartgun system, flechette ammo]

Bios-Fear was born in the hellish irradiated wasteland of Redmond's Glow City. He grew up watching his family suffer from the gruesome and degenerative effects of prolonged radiation poisoning before succumbing to the same fate himself. His only solace was the science-fiction trids and technical datachips he threw himself into headlong, imagining a more perfect future where he could cut out the weak and rotting fleshy bits of himself, replacing them with smooth steel and gleaming circuitry. Slowly, bit by bit, that dream has come true, but trading flesh for metal hasn't cut out the rot at the core of Bios-Fear's being.

Bios-Fear is as close as you can come to a "Toxic Decker," if there is such a thing. He hates everyone who grew up with more than he did, which is to say, everyone. His hatred for metahumans stems from the fact that he sees them as a privileged elite; orks and trolls are big and strong, dwarfs are resistant to disease, elves live forever. He hates Kenneth Brackhaven too, just as he hates everyone else who's wealthy and comfortable, but he will do Brackhaven's dirty work for now, out of a need to improve his technology and that of his gang. His fellow gangers are the only individuals his warped, bitter heart doesn't hate to the utmost, if only because he perceives them as an extension of himself. Bios-Fear doesn't hate technomancers, he's just fascinated with them; unfortunately, he's expressed this fascination so far by kidnapping and cruelly vivisecting every one he's been able to get his hands on in order to find out how they tick.

Bios-Fear is not the actual leader of the Night Hunters (although his immediate crew is very loyal to him), and has his share of disagreements with the actual leadership, who tend to focus more on racism and savagery, and less on acquiring the twisted transhuman technology needed to augment themselves to the utmost. Bios-Fear hopes to one day take control of the entire gang, of course. He doesn't just prefer Matrix combat—bricking his enemies' devices from out of sight, hoping his foes have a decker that will switch to VR so he can slam them with biofeedback—he's a physical coward. He's comparatively weaker and frailer than the rest of the gang in the flesh, and he knows it. After taking even one box of damage to his real body, he attempts to flee combat.



NIGHT HUNTER WOLFPACK

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
3 (5)	3 (5)	3 (5)	3 (5)	4	2	3	2	0.05

Initiative	6 + 1D6 (8 + 1D6)
Condition Monitor	10 (11)
Limits	Physical 4 (7), Mental 4, Social 3
Armor	13
Skills	Automatics 3, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Intimidation 3, Perception 2 (4), Sneaking 2 Unarmed Combat (Cyberimplant Weapons) 3 (+2)
Qualities	Prejudice (radical, metahumans)
Augmentations	Cyberears [Rating 2 w/ audio enhancement 2, spatial recognizer, select sound filter 4], cybereyes [Rating 2 w/ low-light vision, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2, vision magnification], dermal plating 2, hand blade (left hand), hand razors x 2, muscle replacement 2, olfactory booster 2, plastic bone lacing, reaction enhancers 2, retractable spurs (right arm)
Gear	Armor vest, Sony Emperor commlink
Weapons	Hand blade [Unarmed Combat, Acc Physical, Reach —, DV 5(7)P, AP –2] Hand razors x 2 [Unarmed Combat, Acc Physical, Reach —, DV 4(6)P, AP –3] Retractable spurs [Unarmed Combat, Acc Physical, Reach —, DV 6(8)P, AP –2] Steyr TMP [Machine Pistol, Acc 4, DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 30(c)]

Notes: The Night Hunters have hand razors installed in both hands, a hand blade installed in the left hand, and retractable spurs installed in the right arm.

These freaks are less of a gang and more of a new species. They're basically scattered groups of urban savages, heavily cybered hardcore racism. The Night Hunters hate metahumans and are known to stalk them in packs, tearing them apart with cybernetic hands, razor claws, and wicked arm-blades. They make cred to feed their never-ending cyber-modification habit by hiring out as muscle, peddling BTLs and enhancement drugs, and selling the possessions—and often the remains—of their victims. Their tag is a silver-taloned hand slashing across a full moon, which they often wear as biolum, a digital tattoo, or AR tag.

The Night Hunters are the twisted side of transhumanism: modification to become less evolved, seeking the "purity" of becoming like pack animals, little more than beasts. Some Hunters even get vocal and ear modifications allowing them to "sing" in the hypersonic range (although howl is more like it). They use it to communicate with their packmates without most of their victims being able to hear them.

DETECTIVE THEODORE 'TOSH' ATHACK

MALE TROLL									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
10	4	4 (5)	10	3	3	5	6	3	3.3

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (10 + 2D6)
Condition Monitor	13 / 11
Limits	Physical 12, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	13
Skills	Armorer 3, Athletics skill group 4, Close Combat skill group 5, Cracking skill group 1, Electronics skill group 3, Etiquette (Police) 5 (+2), Firearms skill group 6, Heavy Weapons (Launchers) 2 (+2), Interrogation 8, Intimidation (Physical) 7 (+2), Perception 6 (8), Pilot Ground Craft 4, Sneaking 4, Throwing Weapons 2
Qualities	Guts, Code of Honor (No Women, No Children)
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 3, w/ image link, smartlink, flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 2], reaction enhancers 1, wired reflexes 1
Gear	Armor jacket (w/ Chemical Resistance 2, Nonconductivity 2, shock frills), Erika Elite commlink, Four Flash Bangs (DV 10S, AP -4, Blast 10m Radius), Gas Mask, Medical Kit (Rating 6), Two Stimulant Patches (Rating 5), Trauma Patch
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Acc 5 (7), DV 9S(e), AP –5, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ stick-n-shock ammo] w/ underbarrel launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV—, AP—, SS, RC —, w/ CS gas grenades] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 9P, AP –2, SA, RC —, 15(c) w/ explosive ammo]

Tosh is a Knight Errant detective and works their Special Crimes Task Force. He's big, strong, and mean even by troll standards, and not the cleanest officer on KE's payroll. Tosh likes to say that his retirement plan sucks, so he's always looking to pad his nest egg. In return, he can help make minor infractions "slip through the cracks" or hook someone up with some info on a case, so long as it doesn't put his job in jeopardy. Tosh practices his own peculiar code of honor, and in some cases will actually toe the line of law and order if it means he can punish a criminal he truly hates, one he feels as an absolutely vile piece of scum. Tosh's vigilante mentality means he more commonly gets in trouble for going too far than for not going far enough.

Tosh is a bit of a thug, and criminals and street informants are terrified of him. They are often all too eager to give him

whatever he wants before he even raises a hand against them, thanks to his violent reputation. A big troll, he tops three meters, not counting his bull-like horns. He knows that trolls are expected to be stupid, and he will play on that stereotype when it suits him, although he's anything but stupid. He's been frequently cited for excessive force and even brutality on the job, but he's proven himself valuable enough to the department that he's avoided demotion or suspension so far. His superiors in Knight Errant reluctantly continue to use him in spite of his spotty disciplinary track record and numerous unproven accusations of corruption; he is simply too effective a tool against crime not to utilize. As for Tosh himself, he walks the line between cleaning up his act enough to keep his job and his team (the Black Knights) out of jail and his innate need to bend the rules.

For the past year, Tosh and his Black Knights have acted increasingly as the all purpose muscle—almost like shadowrunners, really, just on the other side of the law—of squeaky-clean District Attorney Dana Oaks. While Oaks and Athack hardly see eye to eye on methods, ethics, or anything else, they've closed a lot of cases together and have a grudging respect for each other. While rumors on the street say their relationship may have started because Oaks had serious dirt on Tosh and needed an errand boy, the Black Knights have become fiercely protective of the DA and will go to great lengths to keep anything from happening to her as she launches on her career-making prosecution of Governor Kenneth Brackhaven.

BLACK KNIGHT MAGE

MALE ELF									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
3	3	4 (8)	3	6	6	4	3	5 (6)	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6 (12 + 1D6)
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 4 (5), Mental 7, Social 6
Armor	9
Skills	Alchemy (Healing) 5 (+2), Arcana 3, Assensing 3, Astral Combat 3, Athletics skill group 3, Conjuring skill group 4, Close Combat skill group 3, Firearms skill group 3, Perception 3, Sneaking 3, Sorcery skill group 5 (6)
Spells	Armor*, Detect Drugs, Detect Guns, Heal**, Increase Reaction*, Levitate, Lightning Bolt, Mass Confusion, Stunbolt, Stun Ball * Sustained via focus. **Learned as an alchemical spell.
Alchemical Preparations	2 Heal potions (Potency 5, Force 5), Armor potion (Potency 4, Force 5)
Gear	Armor vest, Erika Elite commlink, Knight Errant badge (Power focus, Force 1), Bronze Chaos Thunderbolt pin (Combat Spellcasting focus, Force 1), Flattened Bullet necklace (Combat Counterspelling focus, Force 1), Silver Caduceus pin (Health Sustaining focus, Force 4)
Weapons	Ares Light Fire 75 [Light Pistol, Acc 6 (8), DV 4S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 16(c) w/ Stick-n-Shock ammo] HK 227 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 5S(e), AP –5, RC 2, w/ Stick-n-Shock ammo]

BLACK KNIGHT HEAVIES

MALE ORKS, PROFESSIONAL RATING 5								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
8 (10)	4	4 (5)	7	3	3	4	3	3.25

Initiative	8 + 1D6 (9 + 2D6)
Condition Monitor	12 (13)
Limits	Physical 9 (10), Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	16
Skills	Athletics skill group 5, Clubs 4, Etiquette (Police) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Heavy Weapons (Launchers) 2 (+2), Sneaking 4, Intimidation 7, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Unarmed Combat (Subdual Holds) 4 (+2)
Augmentations	Aluminum bone lacing (alphaware), dermal plating 2 (alphaware), smartlink (alphaware), synaptic booster 1
Gear	Armor vest (w/ Nonconductivity 2, shock frills), Erika Elite commlink w/ subdermal microphone, Four Flash Bangs (DV 10S, AP -4, Blast 10m Radius), Gas Mask, Goggles (Rating 2 w/ Flare Compensation and Image Link)
Weapons	Ares Antioch-2 [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV Grenade, AP —, SS, RC —, w/ CS gas grenades] Colt Government Model 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 14(c), w/ quick draw holster] ***Pick one of the following:*** HK 227 [SMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 5S(e), AP –5, RC 2, w/ Stick-n-Shock ammo] Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, Acc 4 (5), DV 10S, AP —, SS/SA, RC —, 5(m), w/ external smartgun system, gel rounds]

SCENE 5: CAVEAT VENDITOR

SCAN THIS

In this scene, set the day after the attack on the PCs' safe house, the runners meet with Seth Dietrich at the Fort Lewis Zoological Gardens. Unfortunately for all involved, shortly after Dietrich made it there, he lapsed into one of the alternate personalities that his cognitive fragmentation disorder has inflicted him with. He will fail to recognize the runners, or to remember the deal they were arranging. To make matters worse, moments after the runners realize that something is not right with Dietrich, he is assassinated by elite Chimera assassins. The runners must flee for their lives to avoid becoming collateral damage in the hit; they are far outmatched here, and the paranormal critters escaping their cages aren't making things any easier. If the PCs are lucky, they will get out not just alive, but with the commlink they brought with them, the commlink that Dietrich had on him, and/or the payoff he brought for them.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

When you arrive at the zoo in Fort Lewis, it's a rare sunny day in Seattle, and bright yellow light burns down through

the gauzy gaps in the curtain of clouds and industrial smog overhead. The zoo is busy, but not packed; young couples on dates meander along, pointing at enclosures and giggling, and packs of smiling and laughing kids on school trips dart around the place, zipping from exhibit to exhibit with surging enthusiasm. There are plenty of ordinary animals, lions and tigers, enormous Asian elephants, antelopes, zebra, and giraffes, but stranger fare is also present. You see winged pegasi running in herds in their roofed grasslands enclosure, de-venomed eykyelebenle hanging lazily from the canopy of their artificial jungle habitat, a chitinous, emerald-armored wyrd mantis standing nearly two meters tall, and much more. Perhaps most impressive is the mated pair of phoenixes in their enormous, open-air enclosure, safely contained by sonic fences, twining around each other in flight, their fiery auras crackling with power.

You don't want to let your attention wander too much, so you keep your head down and make for the humidity and fecal musk of the reptile house. Still, it's probably a good idea to keep an eye on the wildlife here; some of these critters are dangerous predators, cages or not.

HOOKS

The runners will have to deal with the logistical challenge of gaining access to the zoo before they can check out the wildlife on display. The fauna here are impressive, flashy, powerful, and dangerous. While they're all safely behind bars (even if those bars are not the physical kind) for the nonce, play up the majesty of the phoenix, the size of the piasma, the beauty of the pegasus, and so on. When the runners encounter Dietrich, who at the moment is someone else entirely, it throws a monkey wrench into their plans while adding another layer of twists and turns to the mystery they're unraveling. Armitage is effectively a time traveler from the recent past, making the entire conversation with him strange and surreal, and his violent death, moments later, oddly tragic. After that, when bullets start flying, the runners get a chance to face off against some deadly assassins and try to stay alive in the middle of a crowded zoo full of rampaging paracritters.

BEHIND THE SCENES

The Fort Lewis Zoo, described in more detail above, belongs to the UCAS military. Even though it's open to the public, it's guarded by UCAS Army Military Police, who are a bit better trained, more alert, and more wary than your standard rent-a-cops. Runners who wish to smuggle weapons inside will have a difficult time doing so, but they shouldn't be dissuaded from trying; being armed will give them a much better chance of surviving what's to come.

When the runners make it to the basilisk exhibit in the reptile house, read or paraphrase the following:

Two things stick out about the man you peg as your "Seth Dietrich" who stands in front of the basilisk exhibit. The first is that you've seen him before, being thrown out of Banshee when you were going in to meet Mr. Johnson. He looked different then–his hair is combed shorter and tighter now, his eyes hidden behind round-lensed mirrorshades–but it's the same guy. The second thing is that he looks more scared than you are. You get being nervous before a meet, but this guy doesn't just look scared, he looks displaced. He also looks wary, as if he expects the 2.5-meter-long black-and-yellow lizards coiled around themselves and the foliage to come crashing through the glass to devour him, or the packs of noisy school kids to converge on him with hidden blades slashing.

He definitely shows no hint of recognition as you cautiously approach. His face is composed; when you get a glimpse of his eyes, you see they look like doll's eyes, cold and artificial. Remote, like the earth seen from far off in space.

"Seth Dietrich?" you ask.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he says, his voice subtly different from the one you heard on the phone. Not the voice itself, but the way he carries it, his inflection. "The name's Armitage," He cocks an eyebrow and suddenly seems more tense, more urgent. "But you seem to know something." He grabs you by the lapels, but his harsh voice stays quiet. "You want to tell me what's going on here?"

At least four distinct personalities, apart from Seth Dietrich, are sharing Seth Dietrich's mind and body. They include a burnt-out Scottish elven mage named Bannickburn and an undercover Lone Star cop who was killed while infiltrating Seattle's Amerind thrill gang, the First Nations, during the first appearance of tempo. Currently in the pilot seat of Dietrich's brain is a man named Jake Armitage.

Armitage was a shadowrunner, specifically a data courier and decker, back in the early 2050s. It took a run going so badly that he woke up as a brain-burnt amnesiac in the morgue for him to come to power as a shaman, following the path of Dog. Becoming a Mr. Johnson, Jake managed to piece together the events surrounding his betrayal, which were linked to a conspiracy between the Aneki Corporation and Matrix Systems of Seattle to develop a true AI years before the emergence of Deus. After solving the mystery, Armitage got his revenge, raiding the Aneki headquarters, geeking everyone inside, and shutting down the AI project with extreme prejudice; in so doing, he came into face-to-face contact with the machine mind, and his consciousness was uploaded. What happened to the real Armitage after that, no one knows, because jacking in to destroy the AI is the last memory *this* copy of Armitage's consciousness possesses. He doesn't understand what happened to him, why he can no longer access the power of Dog, why his face looks different than he remembers, or why it's twenty years in the future. What he *does* remember, mercifully, giving him at least some frame of reference, is that he's lost his memory once before. He thinks of this as a relapse.

Armitage has not had much time to figure out his situation, sharing his life as he does with Dietrich and three other minds. He has spent much of his time leaving notes for

himself and trying to figure out the new technology of the 2070s, and how to access the skillset that Dietrich possesses for his own agenda. He has also been trying to find his old co-workers, most of whom are retired or dead.

Jake knows better than anyone that information is power; he will hold on to any scraps of relevant data he can find, and will try hard to pump the runners for information. He doesn't understand who Seth Dietrich is, since Dietrich has scrubbed himself of most identifying documents, and the only IDs and registrations he has are in fake names.

As the runners interact with Armitage, confusion, intrigue, and outright strangeness should set the mood. Armitage has no intention of buying the commlink without a lengthy explanation of what it is, nor any memory of speaking to the PCs. After a few moments, or when the player characters become confused to the point where they're not sure what to do next, read the following out loud:

You don't even hear the gunshot, just a wet tearing sound as a ragged hole opens in Armitage's throat. His dark-red blood sprays out to cover your face; what you do hear is the CRACK of the high-velocity round striking the pressure glass wall of the basilisk enclosure behind you. The gushing blood also splatters the spidery crack spreading from the impact point in the middle of the glass.

As Armitage's body slumps, lifeless, to the floor, a basilisk uncoils with surprising speed and launches itself at the damaged glass.

Which shatters outwards. You can hear the hiss of the beast along with the screams of the panicking crowd.

There are only three Chimera operatives here, working under contact from Brackhaven Industries. One sniper, the shooter, is located on the open path to the southwest, midway to the Hummingbird exhibit. The other two, posing as unassuming, unimpressive, unremarkable zoo visitors, are located on either end of the Reptile House tunnel. They will open up on the PCs to eliminate witnesses, but do not use the Surprise rules. The Chimera assassins are assumed to have already gotten their Surprise round, the sniper using his to eliminate Dietrich, and the other two moving into position at opposite ends of the tunnel.

Dietrich is dead after the first shot is fired; he has survived his investigation of Brackhaven a long time, and made it through numerous attempts on his life, but bad things happen to good people, and his nine lives have run out. He has a commlink on him that contains the second half of the incriminating files; he also has a thigh pouch with a hundred thousand nuyen in certified credsticks. The runners will want to take both of these items (grabbing either one is a Standard

Action, searching Dietrich for both is a Complex Action) before fleeing. If they don't get the money, the adventure goes on as planned, and the runners will get other chances to get paid down the road either way. If they don't get the second Dietrich commlink, it will wind up in the hands of whichever faction they choose to sell the first commlink to in the next scene.

After all PCs are on the ground (not necessarily dead, just prone) or after one turn has passed, whichever comes first, the Chimera operators will make a fighting retreat to the southwest. They will jump the fence at the hummingbird exhibit and disappear into the wilderness. A powerful mage is waiting to back them up there; his exact stats aren't needed, but he has a Force 10 spirit of earth that will use its concealment power on the Chimera operatives once they are over the fence. Throughout the combat, the two freed basilisks will opportunistically grab PCs, Chimera assassins, or innocent zoo patrons—whoever they can make a meal out of the easiest.

Any assassins the PCs manage to non-lethally subdue won't be much help, even if the PCs somehow manage to extract them from the zoo without getting arrested. The heavily augmented, Russian-speaking killers are all equipped with cortex bombs, which will be detonated remotely or manually if they are in danger of being seriously interrogated or mind probed. Chimera operators know what they're getting into, and they prioritize the safety of the group over their personal survival.

After one turn of combat, UCAS MPs will begin converging on the location of the firefight from all directions, which means that would be an excellent time for the PCs to grab what they can and make their exit, if they haven't already.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

This encounter already has the potential to be entirely too deadly, as the Chimera assassins are more skilled and better equipped than the PCs. It would be a seriously bad idea to go ahead and make them more numerous too, especially since the PCs also have the basilisks to deal with. Instead, the Chimera assassins could have sabotaged the piasma cage nearby, letting out an enormous, pissed-off Awakened bear shortly before their sniper takes the shot. The (unseen) Chimera mage uses an Influence spell to send the terrifying beasty straight for the runners.

If your PCs number more than six and are all hardened badasses and enter the encounter at full health and well equipped, go ahead and add a couple more Chimera assassins if you absolutely must push it to the limit.

PIASMA

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
12	5	5	12	4	2	4	1	2	6

Initiative	9 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	10 / 35
Limits	Physical 14, Mental 4, Social 4
Skills	Sneaking 2, Intimidation 9, Perception 3, Swimming 5, Tracking 6, Unarmed Combat 7
Powers	Armor (8), Enhanced Senses (Thermographic Vision, Wide-Band Hearing), Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV 10P, AP –2)
Weaknesses	Allergy (Sunlight, Mild)

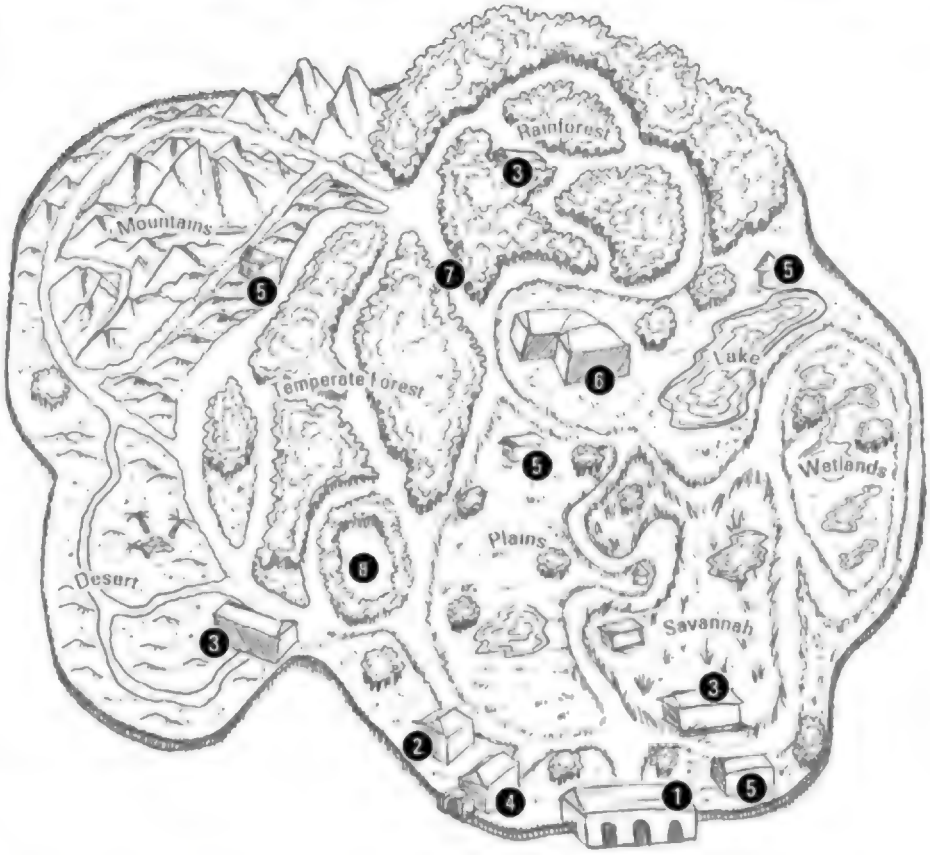
Note: Piasma have +1 Reach.

A Piasma is to a black bear as an ork is to a human: larger, stronger, tougher, meaner, angrier, and uglier. The piasma is very obviously a descendant of the black bear. It shares the bear's muscular body type, dense coat of fur, and powerful claws and muzzle. However, the Awakened piasma is clearly a distinct breed. With an adult length of three meters, a height of 150 centimeters at the shoulder, and a weight of 600 kilograms, the piasma more than doubles the size of most mundane black bears. Piasma are further distinguished by a steel-grey pelt and a pair of powerful boar-like tusks mounted on its lower jaw. Outside of their mating and breeding season, piasma are not particularly territorial. They are solitary hunters, as there are few things that pose a threat to them. Their private nature and flexibility may be tied to their ability to survive near heavily armed metahuman cities. In spite of that combination, metahumans have been subject to piasma attacks. In some instances, this has been due to the piasma feeling threatened, but at times it has simply been because the metahuman was the most readily available prey. This particular piasma has been magically driven into a frenzied state and is more aggressive than normal.

DEBUGGING

A few things can go wrong here. If the PCs choose to walk on the meet as soon as they realize that Dietrich (literally) isn't himself, have the Chimera assassins attack immediately. If the PCs don't manage to escape and get arrested, UCAS MPs will let them go after only a cursory interrogation, assuming they don't have anything too terribly illegal on them. Several witnesses will go to bat for the PCs and avow that they weren't the shooters, *especially* if the PCs acted heroically to try and save innocent bystanders from the Basilisks.

The final and most serious problem is that PCs can, even in a single turn of combat, begin to fall to the Chimera killers' bullet like wheat before a very large monofilament scythe. This is the most serious problem because hey, you don't want to kill all the PCs all at once, do you? While this scene is designed to showcase the ruthless efficiency of Chimera, you may want to downplay the ruthlessness if PCs are dropping like flies, and play up the efficiency. Dietrich is dead, so the assassins can consider their work down and withdraw, leaving the PCs and other zoo attendees alive. Zoo security will be closing in, and the Chimera likely don't want to spend



Fort Lewis Zoo

1. Tickets and main entry
2. Office building
3. Restaurant
4. Gift shop and exit
5. Rest area
6. Wellness center
7. Baslisk tunnel
8. Kid's world playground

a lot of time messing around with military MPs. Alternately, you could have the freed paracritters dive on the Chimera assassins at a fortunate moment, buying the PCs some crucial breathing room to escape.

All that said, some characters may die in this scene, or earlier ones, or later ones. Character death is a harsh fact of life in the Sixth World, and sometimes bullets find the brains that players wish they wouldn't. PCs always have the option of burning Edge to invoke the Hand of God to keep their character in the campaign.

PLACES OF INTEREST

FORT LEWIS ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

1011 West Jackson Avenue

The Zoological Gardens are one of the prime reasons to visit Fort Lewis. They started out as a UCAS military facility for the study of paranatural creatures. Eventually, the UCAS government privatized the site and opened it to the public while maintaining the Gardens' parazoological research programs. Animals are housed in natural habitats maintained with invisible sonic and electrical "fences" along with AR tags that create visual- and sensory-cued barriers. AR-enhanced tours are available with information on the various specimens, including imperial eagles, cockatrices, phoenixes, and much more. Visitors should plan on spending at least half a day appreciating the Zoological Gardens' various attractions, and lunch or a light dinner is available on site or at one of the small restaurants nearby.

Although tourism is pretty brisk, most of the revenue for the Zoological Gardens comes from corporate and government research grants, since information about paranaturals can be worth a lot to the right parties. Much of the parazoologists' research involves animal behavior and learning, useful not only for training guard-critters, but also teaching paranaturals to do other sorts of tasks (deep-sea recovery work, for example).

There are two dozen UCAS Army MPs present at the Fort Lewis Zoo during daytime hours, plus a handful of off-duty soldiers visiting the place on leave, plus the zoo's employees proper. There are only half that many MPs present at night, although that doesn't help the PCs any for the purposes of this adventure. Four MPs are stationed at the entrance, four in the offices just west of the entrance (and outside the zoo park proper), and two or three MPs patrol each of the zoo's themed sections. For the most part, it is a quiet and uneventful posting for the MPs, since the zoo closes before dark, and its restaurants don't serve alcohol.

The entrance filters all guests through a checkpoint where a pair of combination scanners are strategically located across the path. The scanners include a Rating 3 MAD scanner and a Rating 2 millimeter wave scanner (see p. 366, *SR5*) to scan for metallic weapons and cyberware, respectively. Runners who are caught with weapons on their persons (or cyberware in their persons) must achieve at least one hit on a Charisma + Etiquette + Fake License Rating [Social] test to convince the MPs that they have the right to enter the zoo; runners without the appropriate license receive a -2 penalty on this test. A glitch on this test means the MPs are suspicious, while a critical glitch might get the runners arrested outright. The zoo, being a zoo, doesn't have a place for runners to check their weapons; they'll have to be stored in the runners' vehicle. Runners with unlicensed/illegal cyberware who fail the test are not allowed inside; runners with any cyberware that's potentially dangerous, licensed or not, are marked with a special RFID Tag/ARO-equipped yellow bracelet.

If the runners want to attempt to sneak past the detectors, a Sneaking + Agility [Physical] (3) Test is required, and the guards must first be somehow distracted. The runners can also attempt a Sneaking test to enter the zoo through some route other than the main entrance, although the gamemaster should carefully keep track of their position, lest they stumble into the middle of an exhibit. The detectors can also be hacked; they have Device Rating 4, and if they detect any intrusion attempts, they alert the Military Police stationed there. Admission to the zoo costs 35 nuyen for a one-day pass. Patrons receive an identifying ARO and RFID tag equipped bracelet.

The zoo is part of a larger parkland, also open to the public, even though located on military land. The surrounding area hosts a variety of thick growth. Three-meter-tall fences (Structure 8, Armor 8) surround the outer perimeter of the zoo, but individual exhibits are more secure, with dangerous animals enclosed in four-meter-tall electrified fencing topped with monowire, with the entrances and exits secured with Rating 5 maglock cardreaders with Rating 2 Anti-Tamper Systems. Special attention is paid to where animal exhibits directly abut the outer perimeter of the zoo. Some of the less dangerous animals are in open-air enclosures by sonic and electronic fences; these enclosures are watched especially closely by the MPs to prevent stupid park-goers from trying to climb in and irritate the animals. For the most part, the zoo regards the fencing as being for the benefit of the animals, not the patrons.

The zoo's security is controlled by a host that is physically located in the offices just outside the park entrance. Monitors there are linked to cameras (Device Rating 3) that view all of the zoo's major exhibits and the paths connecting them. The security host is Rating 5 (Sleaze 5, Attack 6, Firewall 7, Data Processing 8). In VR, its iconography appears as a colorful and whimsical Dr. Doolittle-esque fantasy island filled with cartoon talking animals and paracritters (some of them deadly IC), and it is constantly running Patrol IC. If it detects an intruder, it scrambles Binder IC, in the form of a swarm of web-spinning spiders. The host is monitored in real time by a security spider, a UCAS Army Air Force officer, who will personally report major intrusions directly to his superiors. There is also a UCAS wage mage on call.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

UCAS MILITARY POLICE

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	4 (5)	4	4	3	3	3	5.7

Initiative	7 (8) + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	9
Skills	Automatics 4, Etiquette 3, Perception 3, Pistols 5, Running 4, Unarmed Combat 5
Augmentations	Reaction enhancers 1
Gear	Armor vest, Renraku Sensei commlink
Weapons	Colt M23 [Assault Rifle, Acc 4, DV 9P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 40(c)] Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ folding stock, laser sight] Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP –5]

UCAS MP WAGE MAGE

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Astral Initiative	8 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 6, Social 6
Armor	9
Skills	Assensing 5, Astral Combat 5, Conjuring skill group 4, Counterspelling 5, Leadership 3, Perception 3, Pistols 4, Spellcasting 6
Spells	Analyze Magic, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Lightning Bolt, Physical Barrier, Silence, Stunball, Stunbolt
Gear	Armor vest, mage sight goggles (10m), Renraku Sensei commlink, sustaining focus (Force 3)
Weapons	Colt Cobra TZ120 [SMG, Acc 4(5), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC 2(3),32(c), w/ folding stock, gas-vent 2, laser sight) Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ folding stock, laser sight]

UCAS MP SECURITY SPIDER

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
3	3	4 (5)	4	3	5 (6)	5	3	5.15

Initiative	9 (10) + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 5 (6), Mental 6 (7), Social 5
Armor	9
Skills	Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat skill group 2, Cracking skill group 5, Electronics skill group 5, Etiquette (Military) 3 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Stealth 6
Augmentations	cerebral booster 1, datajack, reaction enhancers 1
Cyberdeck	Hermes Chariot. Default Setting: Attack 5, Firewall 4, Data Processing 2, Sleaze 4
Programs Loaded	Blackout, Shell
Gear	Armor vest, Hermes Ikon commlink
Weapons	Colt Cobra TZ120 [SMG, Acc 4(5), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC 2(3),32(c), w/ folding stock, gas-vent 2, laser sight] Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ folding stock, laser sight]

CHIMERA SNIPER

HUMAN FEMALE, PROFESSIONAL RATING 6								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4 (7)	6 (9)	5 (7)	3	4	4	4	3	0.085

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (11 + 3D6)
Condition Monitor	10 (12)
Limits	Physical 5 (6), Mental 6, Social 4
Armor	12
Skills	Athletics skill group 5 (8), Biotech skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 6, Con 6, Demolitions 6, Firearms skill group 9 (10), Heavy Weapons 5, Perception 6 (Hearing 8/Visual 10), Pilot Ground Craft 4, Stealth skill group 9, Throwing Weapons 6
Augmentations	All betaware: Cortex bomb (microbomb), cyberears [Rating 4, w/ audio enhancement 2, balance augmenter, damper, select sound filter 6, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ low-light vision, thermographic vision, flare compensation, smartlink, vision enhancement 4, vision magnification], muscle toner 3, pain editor, platelet factories, reflex recorder (Automatics), reflex recorder (Longarms), synthacardium 3, titanium bone lacing, toxin extractor 3, ultrasound sensor 3, wired reflexes 2
Gear	Chameleon suit, Transys Avalon commlink w/ biometric reader and subvocal microphone
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP –3, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 w/ internal smartgun system, explosive ammo] Underbarrel launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV 16P(f), AP +5, Blast –1/m, w/ internal smartgun system, airburst link, fragmentation minigrenades]

Notes: All of the Sniper's devices (including cyberware) are slaved to her commlink.

CHIMERA WETWORKERS (2)

PROFESSIONAL RATING 6								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5 (8)	4 (8)	6 (9)	3 (7)	4	3	3	3	0.12

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (12 + 4D6)
Condition Monitor	11 (12)
Limits	Physical 6 (11), Mental 5, Social 4
Armor	18
Skills	Athletics skill group 4 (7), Biotech skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 7, Con 5, Demolitions 6, Firearms skill group 7 (8), Heavy Weapons 5, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Stealth skill group 7, Throwing Weapons 5
Qualities	Ambidextrous
Augmentations	All betaware: Cortex bomb (microbomb), cyberears [Rating 4, w/ audio enhancement 2, balance augmenter, damper, select sound filter 6, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ low-light vision, thermographic vision, flare compensation, smartlink, vision enhancement 4, vision magnification], 2 cyberarms [obvious, advanced, Strength 6, Agility 6, w/ Agility Enhancement 2, Strength Enhancement 1, cyber machine pistol, spurs], dermal plating 3, platelet factories, pain editor, reflex recorder (Automatics), synaptic booster 3, synthacardium 3, titanium bone lacing
Gear	Armor jacket, nanopaste disguise kit, Transys Avalon commlink [w/ biometric reader and subvocal microphone]
Weapons	Cyber machine pistol [Machine Pistol, Acc 4 (6), DV 7P, AP –1, SA/BF, RC 1 w/ suppressor, external clip port, explosive ammo] Spurs [Unarmed Combat, Accuracy Physical, Reach 0, DV 9P, AP –2])

Notes: All of the wetworkers' devices are slaved to their commlinks.

Chimera is a group of freelance assassins believed to be made up of former members of a Russian intelligence service. They began operating in the Pacific Northwest in 2054 and have been credited with more than a dozen high-profile assassinations including Lt. Col. Chris Van Roggen of the California National Guard, Mafia Capo James O'Malley, and United Oil Vice-President James Rinchik. Chimera members are believed to be human but extensively cyber-enhanced and trained. The organization provides logistical and sometimes magical support to overcome a target's defenses, and Chimera assassins use a variety of techniques, ranging from sniper attacks and explosives to poisons and carefully arranged "accidents" to eliminate their targets. They charge half a million nuyen and up for an assignment, depending on the target and the job.

BASILISKS (2)

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	EDG	ESS
4	3	3	7	5	1	3	1	4	1	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Movement	4/40 (5/25 swimming)
Condition Monitor	11 / 11
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	7
Skills	Infiltrating 3, Perception 4, Stealth 3, Swimming 8, Unarmed Combat 6
Powers	Armor 7, Natural Weapon (Bite: DV 8P, AP –2), Petrification
Weaknesses	Vulnerability (Own Gaze)

A metaspecies of the Komodo dragon, the basilisk averages approximately 250 centimeters from its snout to the tip of its tail and weighs around 100 kilograms. They stand about 20 centimeters at the shoulder, are somewhat broader than their progenitor, and have a spiny dorsal fan, about 30 centimeters in height at its tallest point, running most of their length. Their scales are heavy; coloration is black and bright yellow, with a solid black snout and tail tip. Their maws are filled with sharp, saw-edged teeth that are constantly replaced as they're lost. Not surprisingly, they're aggressively carnivorous, typically feeding on fish and small mammals. They will cheerfully glut themselves on anything they can catch, however, up to and including metahumans.

Extremely territorial, they are relatively easy to train and are used extensively as guard animals by a number of megacorps throughout the Sixth World.

SCENE 6: FRIENDS WITH HIGH PRICES

SCAN THIS

The runners have escaped the clusterfrag at the zoo alive, more or less. Even if they made it out with Dietrich's nuyen, they know they absolutely must offload the commlink, and they may even have an inkling of how big what they're holding is: the key to Brackhaven's downfall. The lines the runners dropped to their contacts back in **Scene 3:Lying Down on the Job** will begin to bite now, and the runners will receive offers from multiple parties. It's up to them who to reel in. Depending on who the runners choose to sell out to, the climax of the adventure could happen right here.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

Tires squeal, rubber burns, no gunshots ring off against the vehicle's chassis; you hear the banshee wail of a thousand sirens in the distance, but no cars or drones pursue you. Another "clean" getaway. You try to slow your ragged breathing and thundering heartbeat, reload your weapons, get a sense of what just happened, who's hurt, how badly, and who all the blood soaking into the upholstery belongs to. Some of it is yours, and some of it isn't. But now it all looks the same.

Brass tacks time: Dietrich is dead, killed by cyborg assassins packing milspec 'ware, and shit has gone sideways.

You should have known that 100,000 nuyen to walk away was too good of a deal to be true. Things went sideways, and you're still stuck with this commlink. You can't just ditch it out the window and let the corps and the crusaders fight it out. Even if you dropped it in a dumpster, no one would believe you'd done so. They'll keep coming for it until they know that they, or one of their rivals, has their hands on it. Brackhaven's people may well keep coming until they're sure they've eradicated every single copy of the data, or until it's a moot point. At this point, the thing is such a giant bullseye that you'd practically pay to offload it, but you should get some nuyen for your trouble. Sell out while the selling's good. But to who?

Bringing up your commlink's AR display, you see that you have messages pending from several of your contacts.

HOOKS

This scene strips this shadowrun down to its rawest and most exciting component: character interaction. Quite simply, there's unlikely to be a unified moral/ethical framework for a starting team of *Shadowrun*. Some runners lean more towards the pure mercenary end of the scale, others towards the heroic rebel end, and most of them fall at every possible point of the continuum in between. Brackhaven is a vile bastard; if the runners know anything about him (and they should), they have good reason to hate him, especially if the team has any metahumans (which it probably does). But he's making the best cash offer. On the flip side, for Dana Oaks, the Ork Underground, and Project Freedom, this data represents not only well-deserved revenge, but also much-needed redemption. But they can't scrape together the same kind of cash the big boys can. The runners will have to choose as a team, to collectively strike a balance between getting paid, and doing the right thing. As their differing values collide, the conflict between player characters might get ugly—beautifully ugly. But don't shy away from that: embrace it. Stir in the tension of the potential betrayal of their contacts and the closing in of rival teams, and you've got yourself a recipe for some high-octane drama.

BEHIND THE SCENES

There's a lot going on at this scene, but where it's happening depends on the runners. This scene, like **Scene 3: Lying Down on the Job**, and **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door**, takes place largely at the PCs' safe houses, or wherever they choose as a meet spot. The runners are likely to be careful edging on supreme paranoia at this point, because one thing should be entirely clear: the entire city is out for that commlink, and the various factions won't bat an eye at wading through an ocean of shadowrunner blood to get to it.

There are many factors that determine how this scene plays out. These factors include:

- Whether the PCs took the second commlink off of Dietrich's body in **Scene 5: Caveat Venditor**.
- Which factions the PCs (or their contacts) made contact with in **Scene 3: Lying Down on the Job**.
- Which factions have tried to take the commlink by force.

Note that this scene and the rest of the adventure assumes the PCs still have Seth Dietrich's Hermes Ikon from the Novelty Hills Sleep and Eat. If they managed to lose that (without dying in the process), the rest of this adventure will have to be massively overhauled by the gamemaster.

Any factions that the PCs reached out to in Scene 3 get back to the PCs in this scene. That includes factions that made a grab for the commlink in Scene 4. They will brazenly get in touch with the PCs through the same contacts that sold them out. The PCs' contacts will leverage their Con + Charisma [Social] rolls to the fullest, lying to the PCs with a straight face. The gamemaster should make all the PCs' Judge Intentions (p. 152, *SR5*) tests secretly, being careful not to reveal the results to the players. If the gamemaster tells a player that one of their contacts is scamming them, the player shouldn't have any way of knowing if that is the result of a critical success or a critical glitch. If the PCs successfully catch one of their less-than-loyal contacts in a lie, the contacts will generally be apologetic, as indicated in the prepared text below.

The major factions should all get in touch with the PCs in this scene, assuming that they've had a chance to find out that the PCs have Dietrich's commlink. Scene 3 provides numerous ways for the various factions to learn that the PCs have the commlink, either through their own independent agents or the PCs contacts. The factions contact the PCs in the same order that they were initially contacted by the PCs' contacts, or failing that, the order in which they found out about the commlink.

ARES REPRESENTATIVE: KAREN KING

If the runners did not encounter the Mafia in **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door**, read or paraphrase the following:

A vidmail has been left on your commlink; the telecom code is from the Ares Macrotechnology headquarters downtown, so it's either Ares or someone going to great expense to look like them. The speaker is an older, dark-haired human woman, with severe features and a bearing that is clearly military or ex-military. The Ares logo is partially visible behind her on a very expensive looking wall.

"My name is Karen King, and I'm an executive vice president with Ares Seattle. I won't waste your time with petty intrigues and will get straight to the point. I understand that you stumbled on some information that is of interest to us. I'm willing to pay a finder's fee of 200,000 nuyen if the information is delivered to us–and only to us–in a timely fashion. You can reach my secretary at LTG #9206 (78-4730)."

If the runners were attacked by Ciarniello family soldiers in Scene 4, read or paraphrase the following instead:

A vidmail has been left on your commlink; the telecom code is from the Ares Macrotechnology headquarters downtown, so it's either Ares or someone going to great expense to look like them. The speaker is a dark-haired human woman, with severe features and a bearing that is clearly military or ex-military. She looks displeased, but is attempting not to scowl too intensely. The Ares logo is partially visible behind her on a very expensive looking wall.

"This is Karen King, Executive VP with Ares Seattle. I want to apologize for the actions of some overzealous mob assholes who thought they were advancing our interests. They weren't, and their error will be corrected. Now, allow me to make it up to you. As you no doubt know by now, you have some information in your possession that's valuable to me. I'm willing to pay a finder's fee of 225,000 nuyen if the information is delivered to us–and only to us–in a timely fashion. Please get back to me soon; my personal secretary can be reached at #9206 (78-4730)."

A former UCAS military officer, Karen King has been with Ares since at least 2050, and probably a lot longer. She's getting up in years, and her longevity treatments can't fully conceal that, even if she is still in better physical shape than some professional shadowrunners. Age hasn't mellowed her personality one iota; she remains a tough, no-nonsense, straight shooting professional, with a highly direct and military approach to most administrative challenges that, like her unflagging loyalty to Ares, has suited her well within the company. King is blunt and to the point, and she doesn't pull her punches or pussyfoot around. If the PCs wish to negotiate with her, she has a Negotiation dice pool of 16 [Social Limit 8]. A glitch by a PC may cause her to lose her patience with the runners. Each net hit the PCs manage to achieve earns them 10,000 nuyen more, but King will use Edge (Rating 5) if necessary to curb her losses.

BRACKHAVEN REPRESENTATIVE: GREGORY ZANE

Zane won't admit to any connection with the Night Hunters, no matter what. Read/paraphrase the following:

The picture-in-picture cutout of the incoming vidcall in your AR display holds the face of a male, Caucasian human in its frame. In his mid-40s, he has a bland, forgettable face, short-cropped sandy hair, and matte-silver cybereyes. You can make out the collar of an armored jacket in the lower portion of the image. "The name's Zane," he says, speaking in short, clipped, efficient sentences. "I'm a shadowrunner, just like you. It's not important who I represent, and I'm sure you understand I won't divulge that

data. What is important is that I want to make an offer on that hot commlink you've been hauling around. I think you're going to like what I have to say, because it is–" he allows the slight hint of a smile to show"– a nice chunk of change I'm offering. Call me back on this commcode; you have my word as a pro there won't be any bullshit."

Zane won't discuss his association with Brackhaven unless pressed. If he does discuss it, he makes it clear he thinks it's irrelevant, and so should the PCs, if they're professionals of his caliber. "A job is a job, and nuyen is nuyen." He offers them a cool 400,000 nuyen for the commlink(s), by far the most being offered by any faction, as long as they guarantee they haven't done any double-dealing and sold the data to someone else. Zane is a straight shooter, and he means what he says about not tracing the call or coming after the PCs, at least prior to the face-to-face meet he wants to arrange. Whether or not he will betray them at the meet them depends on how much the gamemaster wants to push the envelope.

Zane is not at all willing to negotiate for money; Brackhaven's offer is a huge pile of cash, and he knows it.

MITSUHAMA REPRESENTATIVE: TAKAFUMI MAEDA

When the PCs receive Maeda's message, read or paraphrase the following:

A voice-only message is recorded on your 'link's voicemail. The speaker has a noticeable Japanese accent, but an excellent mastery of English, fluent and idiomatic, not chipped. "Greetings; I do not know you, nor do you know me, but I have a business proposition for you. Ordinarily I deal with individuals of your stature through a series of intermediaries, but my intermediaries have disappointed me, and time is of the essence." For someone who says time is of the essence, he sure does like to drag things out. He goes on talking at length, and you worry he's going to hit the message length cutoff before getting to the point. "Recently a document may have surfaced concerning the competence of a high-ranking political official in Seattle's government. Specifically a document that directly ties that individual, whom I will not name, to high-level corruption and criminal dealings. Surely it is in everyone's best interest to see such an individual replaced with all due haste. In the interest of achieving such a desirable outcome, the people I represent–hardly a secret, but it would be vulgar

and inappropriate to name them–would be willing to make a generous donation in the interest of bringing this information to light. A donation in the vicinity of 200,000 nuyen. If you believe you could help with this public service, you should contact LTG #9201 (31 7683) at your earliest convenience. Aragato gozaimasu."

Takafumi Maeda, a male Japanese human who will go to great lengths to avoid using his name, is a very big fish. Like Karen King, he is a megacorp representative on Seattle's United Corporate Council planning division; he represents Mitsuhama Computer Technologies. While a fixture in Seattle politics for years, Maeda is an import from Neo-Tokyo and retains a degree of traditional Japanese style in all of his dealings. He is stringently and rigorously formal, to the point of obsequiousness, and almost obsessively sure to be deferent to superiors, firm with inferiors, and to tread cautiously with anyone who is not clearly one or the other. He does not expect non-Japanese to be able to grasp the finer points of proper corporate etiquette, but even his low expectations are constantly disappointed. Maeda likes the sound of his own voice, and he prefers to utter as many multisyllabic words as possible.

If the PCs openly accuse Maeda of arranging for the Yakuza attack in Scene 4 (assuming that happened), read or paraphrase the following:

"I certainly do not associate with any such individuals, nor does Mitsuhama Computer Technologies, and I find such an irresponsible suggestion utterly repulsive, to say nothing of it being unprovable. The tack you are taking is not advisable for business operations, and I request that you cease any and all such slander immediately, because it is offensive and inappropriate. And even if I did–absurd as it sounds–associate with such individuals, certainly neither I nor my employers could ever be held responsible for the actions they would take of their own initiative, motivated by their own base ambition. But if your mercenary nature dictates it is truly necessary that I increase my opening bid to silence any such outlandish rumors, I will, with a heavy heart, offer an additional 25,000 nuyen. But know that I am sorely disappointed in your conduct."

If this exceptionally verbose guilt trip persuades the PCs not to take the extra money, Maeda apologizes for his critique and praises their discretion. His overall opinion of them and attitude towards them improves if they elect not to gouge him as hard as possible. Not because the money means anything to him—an amount as small as 25,000 nuyen doesn't—but because he respects restraint.

If the PCs wish to negotiate with Maeda, he has a Negotiation Dice Pool of 15 [Social Limit 6]. Each net hit the PCs manage to achieve earns them 10,000 nuyen more, but like King, Maeda has no compunctions about spending Edge (Rating 5) to augment his hits here.

PROJECT FREEDOM REPRESENTATIVE: ELIZA BLOOM

If the runners have encountered Eliza Bloom before, such as in the adventure **Shell Games** (p. 97, *Jet Set*), these interactions should be altered to reflect their existing relationship with her.

If the runners did not encounter Tosh Athack in Scene 4, read or paraphrase the following:

Your commlink chirps, and you see you have an incoming call from an unfamiliar number. Answering it, you see an attractive female dwarf of Amerind heritage. Her black hair is feathered with dark red highlights, and she wears a Mortimer of London longcoat. You recognize her immediately as Eliza Bloom, a candidate who ran against Governor Brackhaven in last year's election only to be, to put it politely, curb stomped. "Hi, I'm glad you're still alive! Okay, maybe not the best way to start a conversation, but I really am! I understand that Seth Dietrich's commlink found its way into your possession. If you didn't know, I think that Dietrich has the dirt on Kenny Brackhaven that we need so we can see that Humanis-loving pig hang once and for all. Project Freedom's willing to pay a lot to get our hands on that data. Even better than the money, though, the Ork Underground would owe you a big favor, and so would I."

If the runners were attacked by Tosh's Black Knights in Scene 4, read/paraphrase this instead:

Your commlink chirps, and you see you have an incoming call from an unfamiliar number. Answering it, you see an attractive female dwarf of Amerind heritage. Her black hair is feathered with dark red highlights, and she wears a Mortimer of London longcoat. You recognize her immediately as Eliza Bloom, a candidate who ran against Governor Brackhaven in last year's election only to be, to put it politely, curb stomped. "Listen, I'm really, really sorry that Knight Errant goon squad came after you. The truth is, that was a colossal fuck up. Not my fault, though, not in the slightest. MacCallister and I wanted to reach out to you with a cash deal, but DA Oaks was worried you'd sell out to a higher bidder. Detective Athack took her protestations a bit too literally and flew off on you guys half-cocked. So, not my fault, but still, you have my apologies.

"Now, why don't we deal like grownups? We both want to see Brackhaven fry, right? I understand that Seth Dietrich's commlink found its way into your possession. If you didn't know, I think that Dietrich has the dirt on Kenny Brackhaven that we need so we can see that Humanis-loving pig hang once and for all. Project Freedom's willing to pay a lot to get our hands on that data. Even better than the money, though, the Ork Underground would owe you a big favor, and so would I."

Bloom has personal reasons for wanting to see Brackhaven burn, besides the fact that he's a racist scumbag and she's an Amerind dwarf shaman. Bloom can only offer 80,000 nuyen,

and that represents all of the funds that MacCallister, Tauren, and DA Oaks can kick in, also. If the PCs wish to negotiate with her for more money, she has a Negotiation Dice Pool of 13 [Social Limit 10] and an Edge of 4. Each net hit the PCs manage earns the group 5,000 extra nuyen, to a maximum of 100,000 (Bloom *really* can't offer any more than that).

FACE TIME

No matter who the PCs choose to sell the commlink to, they will need to arrange the meet themselves. That means they get to choose on the time and place. This gives the players the challenge of planning and executing a safe and successful face to face, it also gives the characters the opportunity for a bit of extra security. All of the factions will be quite flexible but won't go anywhere suicidally dangerous (i.e., Glow City in the Redmond Barrens) or anywhere that's an obvious spot for an ambush. In the end, let players roll relevant Knowledge and Active skills (Safehouse Locations, Seattle Area Knowledge, Security Procedures, Security Design, Tactics, and so on) to generate ideas and options, but leave the final decision of where to meet up to them. *Seattle 2072* provides several Places of Interest, which offer plenty of good ideas for meeting areas; earlier Seattle-focused sourcebooks also provide options.

Along with the location, the terms of the meet are also up to the PCs, as long as they're reasonable. All of the people the PCs are potentially meeting with are *far* too important to come anywhere alone and unarmed, but setting limits on the number of bodyguards and level of armaments is entirely reasonable, considering the circumstances. In the end, the gamemaster should have the PCs make Etiquette and/or Tactics rolls while also using his best discretion to decide who brings what forces with them.

Karen King will attend her meeting in person, along with eight Ares Knight Errant special forces, and a dwarven Ares wagemage. Zane will come to the meet on Brackhaven's behalf, with six of his guys. Zane will hire a shadowrunner (use the Troll Combat Mage on p. 116, *SR5*) to provide magical support for the meeting; Bios-Fear, if he is still alive, will be out of sight providing Matrix overwatch. Maeda won't risk being seen himself but will send his representative, a human-looking female elf mystic adept named Kiyoko Inoue, as his "bagman." A six-man MCT Rapid Response Team will be standing by; the team includes a combat hacker. Finally, Bloom will send Tauren along with Tosh and his Black Knights for backup; Tauren's stats appear in *Cast of Shadows*, while stats for Tosh and the Black Knights appear in **Scene 4: A Knock at the Door**, p. 26.

Each faction's team arrives at the meet location, whenever it is, an hour early in order to perform drone reconnaissance and astral sweep, check for booby traps, and make sure they're not stumbling into a killing field. They don't go so far as to station their own sentries and snipers, though, as that would send the wrong message. Each team arrives in a convoy of ground vehicles, but each one except the Project Freedom team has helicopter support on standby, in case the shit hits the fan and they need a quick exit.

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

If the PCs got the Transys Avalon that was on Dietrich (it's registered to an Alan Foster, one of Dietrich's fake SINs although *not* one of his alternate personalities), they may wish to hack it, as a Matrix Perception Test reveals that it has an encrypted file on it. Doing so requires a successful Hack On The Fly or Brute Force action to acquire a mark on the device, which must succeed versus the device's dice pool of 12.

When the Matrix specialist successfully acquires a mark on the device, he can then attempt a Crack File action to access the protected files. The Matrix specialist rolls Hacking + Logic [Attack] versus the twice the protection rating (a dice pool of 10). Once a hacker manages to crack the file protection, all that is necessary is a successful Edit File action to download/copy/read it. Edit File requires them to achieve a net success on a Computer + Logic [Data Processing] roll versus a dice pool of 12.

An analysis of the decrypted file from the second commlink reveals it is a garbled mess like the first one. A decker can, however, attempt to put the two fragmented files together, as long as both have been decrypted. Doing so is an Extended Logic + Computer [Data Processing] (20, 10 Minutes) Test. A glitch means that some of the data has been lost, while a critical glitch means that *all* useful data has been lost, which may have serious repercussions later on. If the PCs manage to reassemble the files, give them Player Handout #2.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

If the runners here are dealing with anyone but Zane, you can push the envelope by having Zane's team attack the meet in force. If the PCs have already encountered the Night Hunters, you may wish to instead have the attack force be composed of Ares or Mitsuhama company men, or the Black Knights. In the end, any faction that the PCs didn't elect to sell the commlink to is a valid option here. The most logical choice would be any faction that the PCs seriously considered selling out to, but ultimately decided against. Especially if one or more PC holdouts argued for that faction in favor of the choice that won out in the end. For instance, if the PCs collectively decided to sell out to Ares, but one of them had their heart set on selling the commlink to their contacts in the Ork Underground, the Black Knights would be the most appropriate choice.

If the runners choose to sell the commlink to Zane, then Pushing The Envelope works slightly differently, because this scene becomes the de facto climax of the adventure. Zane doesn't need the runners to recover the data from Brackhaven Investments. He can just walk in and get it. So, even if you *don't* choose to push the envelope, you should either have another team attack the meeting, as described above, or have Zane double cross the PCs and try to ambush them to take his money back. Either of these can be scaled up appropriately to serve as the climactic final combat.

If the runners are selling to Zane *and* you wish to push the envelope? Have Zane double cross them, *and* have another team crash the meeting. Bullets will fly and chaos will erupt,

as three factions fight a battle that erupts out of the shadows and onto the streets.

Details on the numbers, abilities, equipment, composition, and tactics of the four enemy forces you can throw at the runners here appear in **Grunts And Moving Targets** below.

DEBUGGING

If the PCs choose to sell out to Brackhaven's people for the big payday, then feel free to let that happen. Shadowrunners are not superheroes, after all; they're professional criminals. The **Pushing The Envelope** section above provides for a climax to happen in this scene to replace the suggested climax in **Scene 7: Threading the Needle**. A bigger issue than the runners choosing to give the commlink to the bad guys is the runners being unable to reach a decision at all.

The degree to which player characters fighting amongst themselves over where to sell the commlink constitutes a "bug" or a "feature" depends on your gaming group and your gaming preferences. If you embrace the high drama of scheming, backstabbing, and player conflict, the derailments and tangents that result from PCs not being able to come to a consensus could be the highlight of the adventure. If, on the other hand, your gaming group functions best when everyone cooperates like a well-oiled machine, you should attempt to keep the adventure on track by quashing the most intense disagreements between players.

If there is an even number of runners, or no one consents to follow democratic procedure, the PCs may become deadlocked, stalling the adventure indefinitely. Don't let this happen. As a gamemaster, one of your jobs is to constantly remind the PCs of the mounting time pressure. If they don't decide where to sell the commlink, they might be struck by an enemy force while they're unprepared and at an indefensible location, still arguing. The longer they remain indecisive, the more exposed and vulnerable they are. This isn't a jury situation, where they can keep arguing back and forth, changing their minds endlessly. The strict time pressure should be enough to force at least one of the holdouts to begrudgingly switch sides in order to achieve a consensus. If they don't, feel free to throw an enemy team at them to drive home the degree to which the wolves are closing in.

The other thing that can go wrong in this scene is if the PCs, still wounded and exhausted from the brutal ambushes in Scene 4 and Scene 5, aren't up to handling the enemy strike teams in **Pushing The Envelope**. If the PCs aren't selling to Zane and aren't in good shape, simply don't push the envelope here. Play up the paranoia and tension of the meet with the buyer, keep the PCs looking over their shoulders constantly, but don't actually drop the hammer on them with an enemy strike team. They'll get their share of action in Scene 7 after they've had a chance to lick their wounds.

However, if the PCs are badly wounded and out of resources and they choose to sell the commlink to Zane, you're in a bit of a spot. Scene 7 is omitted if the PCs cut a deal with Zane, making this scene the climax of the adventure, which means big stuff needs to happen. But that big stuff does not need to involve tons of people with weapons pointed at the PCs. Instead of having Zane ambush the wounded PCs, put them in a ditch, and take the commlink from them without paying (while this is arguably what would happen in-universe if the PCs failed to adequately prepare for the meeting, and also arguably what the PCs karmically deserve for selling out to a snake like Brackhaven), have the ambush be interrupted by an attack by one of the other factions: Ares or Mitsuhama Shadow Ops, or Tosh's Black Knights. If the NPCs focus their fire on each other, the PCs stand a better chance of surviving.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

KNIGHT ERRANT SPECIAL FORCES

PROFESSIONAL RATING 5								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5	5 (7)	5 (7)	4 (6)	4	4	4	3	2.3
Initiative	9 + 1D6 (11 + 3D6)							
Condition Monitor	11							
Limits	Physical 6 (8), Mental 6, Social 4							
Armor	12							
Skills	Athletics skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 5, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Firearms Skill group 5, Gunnery 4, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Stealth skill group 6							
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, low light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, wired reflexes 2							
Gear	Armor jacket, Erika Elite commlink							
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2 w/ internal smartgun system] Underbarrel launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV 16P(f), AP +5, Blast –1/m, w/ internal smartgun system, airburst link, fragmentation minigrenades] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 16(c), w/ smartlink							

Eight Ares Knight Errant special forces, in plainclothes, accompany Karen King to the meet. Only six will be sent to attempt to grab the commlink if it's being sold to someone other than Ares. These numbers include the driver of the Ares Citymaster they arrive in, who uses the same stats.

BARON GRIMMS

MALE DWARF									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	M	EDG	ESS
5	4	3	5	5	6	3	6	3	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6 (12 + 4D6)
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	12 (20)
Skills	Assensing 6, Astral Combat 6, Athletics skill group 4, Close Combat skill group 4, Conjuring skill group 7, Enchanting skill group 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 8 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Perception 6, Sorcery skill group 7, Stealth skill group 3
Qualities	Focused Concentration, Spirit Bane (Water)
Spells	Acid Stream, Analyze Truth, Armor, Combat Sense, Detect Enemies, Fireball, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Influence, Manabolt, Mind Link, Mind Probe, Physical Barrier, Punch, Stunball, Stunbolt
Gear	Armor jacket, Detect Enemies alchemical preparation (Force 5, Potency 5, Destruction Trigger), Erika Elite commlink, Fireball alchemical preparation (Force 5, Potency 5, Destruction Trigger), Healing alchemical preparation (Force 5, Potency 5, Destruction Trigger), Power Focus (Force 2, coat of arms), stim patch (Rating 5), Sustaining Focus (Force 6, iron bracelet)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 16(c), w/ smartlink]

Notes: Baron Grimms is currently sustaining Increase Reflexes at 6 hits at no penalty due to his Focused Concentration quality, and sustaining a Force 8 Armor (with 8 hits) with his Sustaining Focus.

It's no cool-sounding shadowrunner handle; Baron Grimms is an actual baron from Norway, a part of the Scandinavian Union where corporate loyalties are fiercely divided. Ares is not one of the leading megas vying for control of Northern Europe, but Grimms has made his choice nonetheless, and he stands by it. A powerful magician, Grimms is an acquaintance of Ares Europe VP Soren Johanssen. He was visiting Seattle to assist with an unrelated Ares magical research project and has been brought in by King to provide magical overwatch. Ares saves money on hiring a shadowrunner, and Grimms is significantly more capable than an average corpsec wage mage. His personal combat unit has a storied history in Ares Desert Wars franchise fights. Treat Grimms as the lieutenant of the KE special ops commandos. He will be present whether the PCs are meeting with Karen King to sell her the commlink, or an Ares Strike Team is being sent to seize the commlink by force.

Grimms is a powerful spellcaster, even if he does somewhat lack finesse and subtlety. He does not currently have any bound spirits, but he will make it his first priority to summon a Force 6 fire elemental if the combat begins to go against his side.

ARES CITYMASTER

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
4 / 3	4 / 3	2	18	22	5	5	12

Modifications	Chemical Seal, Extra Armor, Heavy Rooftop Turret (Manual Control, w/ Stoner-Ares M202 MMG), Rigger Adaptation

This is the vehicle the Ares team uses to travel to the meet.

KNIGHT ERRANT HELO PILOT

PROFESSIONAL RATING 5								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	4	5	4	4	4	5	3	3.6

Initiative	10 + 1D6 (9 + 4D6)
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 5
Armor	9
Skills	Athletics skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 3, Gunnery 6 (8), Perception 6, Stealth skill group 6, Pilot Aircraft (Rotorcraft) 6 (8) (+2)
Augmentations	Control rig 2, cybereyes [Rating 2, with flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], datajack
Gear	Armor vest, Erika Elite commlink, stim patch (Rating 5)
Weapons	Ares Crusader II [Machine Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF, RC 2, 40(c), w/ gas-vent 2, smartlink]

ARES DRAGON

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
4	4	3	22	20	3	4	18

Modifications	Chemical Seal, Extra Armor, Heavy Weapon Mount (w/ GE Vindicator Minigun w/ Explosive Rounds), Rigger Adaptation, Sensor Upgrade 1

BRACKHAVEN OPERATIVE

There are six of these (male, human, Caucasian) lightly augmented operatives in Gregory Zane's crew. These consummate professionals have been working for him a long time and operate as a well-oiled tactical machine. They have contingencies in place for nearly any situation. They aren't exceptional in any one area, but are generally competent in all fields. They are accompanied by a troll combat mage (p. 116, *SR5*) who obviously has different long-term goals from their employer, a fact the PCs may wish to leverage, if they're smart. The combat mage hasn't done overly exhaustive research on for whom he's working.

Zane's team arrives to the meet in a pair of black Rover Model 2072 SUVs.

PROFESSIONAL RATING 4								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5 (6)	4 (6)	5 (6)	3	3	4	4	3	2.9

Initiative	9 +1 D6 (12 + 2D6)
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 4
Armor	11
Skills	Athletics skill group 4 (6), Automatics (Submachine Guns) 4 (+2), Clubs (Batons) 4 (+2), Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 5, Perception 5, Stealth skill group 6, Pilot Ground Craft 4 (Wheeled) (+2), Throwing Weapons 3
Qualities	Blandness
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], muscle toner 2, plastic bone lacing, reaction enhancers 1, synthacardium 2, wired reflexes 1 (alphaware)
Gear	Erika Elite commlink, Lined Coat w/ Rating 4 Non-Conductivity, Stun Baton [Reach 1, DV 9S(e), AP -5]
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Accuracy 5 (7), DV 6P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 16(c), w/ silencer, smartlink] HK 227 [SMG, Accuracy 5 (7), DV 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28(c), w/ retractable stock, smartlink, suppressor]

ROVER MODEL 2072

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
5 / 5	4	2	15	12	2	4	6

Zane's team also has access to a helicopter, if needed. The pilot uses the same stats as the standard Brackhaven operatives but has the skills Pilot Aircraft and Gunnery skills each at Rating 5.

AIRSTAR 2050

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
4	4	3	15	20	3	5	12
Modifications			Weapon Mount (w/ Ingram Valiant, loading Explosive Rounds), Sensor Upgrade 2				

KIYOKO INOUE

Captivatingly beautiful, enchantingly arresting, and serenely confident, Kiyoko Inoue is Takafumi Maeda's executive assistant, bodyguard, and trusted second in command. Because of her considerable, if non-traditional, magical abilities, she is also more than capable of functioning as his bagman. Kiyoko recognizes that she will drop dead quickly in a stand-up fight, and if the situation devolves into one, her first priority will be to use her prepared Invisibility spell to take herself out of the line of fire. Then she will hang back, applying the rest of her "buffs" before joining the fray, hopefully by shooting an important-looking combatant in the back of the head at point-blank range.

FEMALE ELF										
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	EDG	ESS
3	5	5 (6)	3	4	5	5	6 (9)	6	3	6

Initiative	10 + 2D6
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 7, Social 8 (10)
Armor	8
Skills	Alchemy (Health) 6 (+2), Assensing 5, Athletics skill group 3, Con 3 (7), Counterspelling 6 (Combat) (+2), Cracking skill group 3, Electronics skill group 5, Influence skill group 6 (10), Perception 5 (6), Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistols (Hold-Outs) 6 (+2), Stealth skill group 6, Unarmed Combat 5
Adept Powers	Astral Perception, Enhanced Perception, Improved Reflexes 1, Kinesics 4, Traceless Walk
Spells	Combat Sense, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increase Agility, Increase Charisma, Physical Mask, Resist Pain
Alchemical Preparations	Combat Sense (Potency 4, Force 6), Improved Invisibility (Potency 4, Force 6), Increase Agility (Potency 4, Force 6), Resist Pain (Potency 4, Force 6)
Gear	Actioneer Business Suit, Transys Avalon commlink (w/ biometric reader and subvocal microphone)
Weapons	Fichetti Tiffani Needler [Hold-out, Acc 5, DV 8P(f), AP +5, SA, RC —, 4(m), w/ Hidden Gun Arm Slide]

Notes: Kiyokou ingested a preparation with Increase Charisma with 3 hits immediately prior to the meeting; it will last for 7 minutes.

MCT RAPID RESPONSE TEAM

PROFESSIONAL RATING 5								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
4	6 (8)	5	4 (6)	4	4	4	3	1.4

Initiative	9 + 1 D6 (13 + 3D6)
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6 (7), Mental 6, Social 4
Armor	9
Skills	Athletics skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 8, Etiquette (Corporate) 6 (+2), Firearms skill group 6, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Stealth skill Group 6
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, wired reflexes 2
Gear	Hermes Ikon commlink, lined coat
Weapons	Ninja-To [Blade, Reach 1, DV 9P, AP –2] Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, Acc 5, DV 7S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 4(m)] Yamaha Raiden [Assault Rifle, Acc 6 (8), DV 11P, AP –2, BF/FA, RC 1, 60(c), w/ sound suppressor, smartlink]

These six elite plainclothes operatives ordinarily serve as a Zero Zone Rapid Response Team. When a shadowrunner team foolishly attempts to infiltrate a Mitsuhama Facility, they're the guys that chopper in with full body armor and

assault rifles to make sure no one gets out alive, enforcing Mitsuhama's Zero Zone security policy. They're no strangers to field ops and are often used to track down runners that escaped alive so that they may correct that oversight. They're not as geared up now as they are when in full Zero Zone mode because they are trying to keep a lower profile.

MCT COMBAT HACKER

PROFESSIONAL RATING 5								
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5	6 (9)	5	4 (7)	5	4	5	4	1.4
Initiative	10 + 1D6 (14 + 3D6)							
Condition Monitor	11							
Limits	Physical 6 (8), Mental 6, Social 5							
Armor	9							
Skills	Athletics skill group 6, Close Combat skill group 7, Cracking skill group 7, Demolitions 5, Electronics skill group 6, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Firearms skill group 6, Leadership 6, Perception 6, Stealth skill group 6							
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], datajack, muscle augmentation 3, muscle toner 3, wired reflexes 2							
Cyberdeck	Mitsuhama Shuriken (default setting: Attack 7 (8), Firewall 6 (7), Data Processing 5 (6), Sleaze 8)							
Programs Loaded	Armor, Decryption, Encryption, Signal Scrub, Toolbox, Track, Virtual Machine							
Gear	Hermes Ikon commlink, lined coat							
Weapons	Ninja-To [Blade, Reach 1, DV 9P, AP –2] Yamaha Pulsar [Taser, Acc 5, DV 7S(e), AP –5, SA, RC —, 4(m)] Yamaha Raiden [Assault Rifle, Acc 6 (8), DV 11P, AP –2, BF/FA, RC 1, 60(c), w/ sound suppressor, smartlink]							

This MCT company man has years of hacking experience, a full suite of combat cyberware, and a bleeding edge cyberdeck. He is there to provide Matrix overwatch but won't hesitate to go on the offensive and shut down the opposition's Matrix advantage.

The MCT team, along with Inoue, arrives in a pair of armored white Hyundai Shin-hyung sedans.

HYUNDAI SHIN-HYUNGS

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
5 / 4	6	3	10	12	1	2	4
Modifications	Extra Armor, Weapon Mount (Yamaha Raiden w/ APDS Ammo)						

The MCT RRT can also access a Nissan Hound, but will most likely only do so if they come under attack at the meeting and need a quick exfiltration to safety. The Nissan Hound they use in such circumstances is equipped with a door gunner and a half-dozen more RRT members wearing full body armor with chemical seals. For the pilot, use the same stats as the Knight Errant Helo Pilot.

NISSAN HOUND

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
5 (7)	4 (6)	3	16	16	2	4	12
Modifications	Chemical Seal, Rigger Adaptation, Two Weapon Mounts (each w/ Cavalier Arms Alamo EBR loading APDS Rounds)						

Tauren and company arrive in a modified GMC Bulldog used by the Black Knights.

GMC BULLDOG

HANDL	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS
3 / 3	3	1	16	16	1	4	6
Modifications	Extra Armor, Rooftop Turret w/ Enfield AS-7, Rigger Adaptation, Sensor Upgrade Rating 2						

SCENE 7: THREADING THE NEEDLE (OPTIONAL)

SCAN THIS

The runners have scored at least one, and maybe two, of Seth Dietrich's commlinks and cracked the encrypted files contained within. Even if the runners found only the first commlink, the faction they sold it to recovered the second. The two encrypted, fragmented files, once re-united, decrypted, and repaired, reveal the location of damning evidence on Governor Brackhaven that is stashed in a secure server in a computer room on the 10th floor of the Brackhaven Investments headquarters downtown. Of course, those who want to see Brackhaven burn need a way to get the data out. For that, they will turn to shadowrunners—specifically, the PCs. Whether the PCs sold the commlink and the files on it to Ares, Mitsuhama, or Project Freedom, that faction will turn around and offer them a high-stakes, high-paying job: infiltrate Brackhaven Investments and extract Emile Corrigan's insurance policy from the secure server.

The **Tell It To Them Straight** section here *does not* happen at the beginning of the scene. Rather, it happens *after* the runners have accepted the offer described in **Behind The Scenes** and gotten tooled up to take on the Brackhaven run. It also assumes the Space Needle as the mission launch site, and it should be tweaked slightly if the PCs instead launch their mission from the TripleTree hotel downtown.

If the PCs sold the commlink to Brackhaven's shadow operative, Gregory Zane, skip this scene. The previous scene provides the climactic final battle, and the following quasi-scene provides the information you need for tying up loose ends.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

A cold wind off the Puget Sound stirs your hair and clothing from behind, causing the nylon wings of the ultralight to rustle with an almost silent whisper of plastic fabric. Be-

low you and before you glitters the firmament of Seattle's nighttime skyline, blazing to shame the stars that mirror it in the blackened sky above. The lights of corporate skyrakers and VTOL landing pads glisten like chipped gemstones scattered across black sand. Patches of dark clouds rolling across the night sky release flurries of snow and icy crystals of freezing rain.

Above your head, the red glow of the Space Needle's spire radiates downwards, a hell-red beacon beckoning power to corruption, and guiding corruption to power. The 184-meter landmark is dwarfed by the corporate monoliths that rise above it in all directions, creating a sheer, vertical plascrete and mirrorglass divide between Seattle's haves and have-nots. But from the top of the structure looking down, it doesn't seem all that short.

A final check of the Nightwing's status reveals green across the board; the ultralight is more of a glider than a plane, but what it lacks in reassuring bulk and safety features it makes up for with its whisper-quiet engine and radar-absorbent wing structure. The wind is picking up, and the dark clouds seem to be coalescing into something bigger and more sinister. In other words, there is no time like the present. With a silent prayer to whatever power you think most likely to answer, you shuffle forward, carrying the glider with you off the edge.

You have a moment to contemplate how Icarus must have felt when he reached his unexpected zenith and began to fall—*oh drek*, he must have thought—and then a thermal current slows your descent into a controllable glide, and you watch the parallax shadowscape of Seattle scroll past below you. You can't see your house from here, but landmarks like the Aztechnology pyramid and the massive, illuminated bulk of the former Renraku arcology are visible. The few downtown blocks between you and the Brackhaven Investments skyscraper slide away quickly as you fly south, and then veer to the east.

In the streets below, the protests and picketers writhe back and forth, clashing with the line of metroplex guards and Knight Errant cops; from up here it looks like two armies of different colored ants fighting a war over picnic crumbs. Lifting your gaze, you see the helipads on the roof of the BI building, flashing with blinking red landing lights, the corners of the building blazing with arc-sodium searchlights that illuminate the mercury-dark slivers of falling rain and snow. Behind you is the cold wind blowing off the Puget Sound. Below you is a 160-meter drop to the uncaring streets below. Ahead of you is the anti-aircraft radar that needs to be hacked, the shield-wall of maglocks that need to be sleazed, a symphony of alarms that need to be silenced, and a small army of corpsec guards to deal with.

You can't help but smile.

HOOKS

Everything that makes *Shadowrun* classic and iconic is present in this scene. Man, magic, and machine? Sure. Doing crimes in the future? Check. High-tech, low-life cyberpunks sticking it to the man? Check and mate. This is a high-stakes, high-paying, high-intensity infiltration. Short weeks away from being rank noobs, the runners have a chance to penetrate the black heart of Brackhaven investments on a mission that could shake up Seattle's power. They'll be up against the corporate security machine of one of Seattle's most devious AA corps. Even better, they get to leverage a bankroll and a toolbox that prime runners dream of, and they get access to all the coolest toys. What could be better?

BEHIND THE SCENES

The offer for this mission comes from the same party the runners sell the commlink to. The offer can come immediately in the same scene as the meeting (**Scene 6: Friends with High Prices**) or can be extended to the runners later, whichever the gamemaster thinks would better suit the pace of the adventure and the play style of the group. The key thing, though, is that whenever the offer comes in, the runners should absolutely have a chance to rest and recover before beginning this op; they should also have a chance to spend Karma and stock up on gear with the payoff they just received. For many of them, moving up in lifestyle category, at least temporarily, might be appropriate. Runners that were living on the streets and survived the events of the preceding scenes have stumbled onto the big time and climbed the ladder in record time. PCs need a little bit of time to process that, and they definitely need time to lick their wounds after the parade of ambushes and shock and awe assaults they weathered in Scene 4, Scene 5, and Scene 6.

THE ARES OFFER

Ares will offer the runners 80,000 nuyen for the infiltration. This is a fair and generous offer, but is not the outrageous pile of money that Ares spent to buy the commlink. If the runners point that out, Karen King will counter with the fact that while Ares can easily pay someone else to perform the Brackhaven Industries run, nothing will change the fact that the runners are the one who are sticking it to Brackhaven, and this is far from the deepest buried secrets on the street. The runners probably don't want to be burning their bridges with Ares right now, in other words. Runners can of course negotiate, opposed by King's dice pool of 16 [Social Limit 6]. Each net hit earns the team an additional 5,000 nuyen.

Ares does not pay up-front, having just given the runners a down payment of 200,000 nuyen or more. Sweetening the deal, however, is the fact that Ares is willing to provide a great deal of top-notch equipment to help the runners with the operation. Equipment that costs less than the payment for the run can be taken out of the runners' paycheck, if the runners choose to keep it or manage to lose it. Equipment that costs more than the run pays is only being loaned on a temporary basis and must be returned, or else the runners will be in Ares' debt. Which tends not to work out well for anyone.

Ares will also provide an equipment budget of 50,000 nuyen, and corp is able to acquire anything the runners need with Availability 12 or less, and any Ares products the runners need with Availability 18 or less, within 24 hours. These items are the runners to keep if they (the runners *and* the gear) survive the run, but Ares will not give out anything that has no obvious purpose on the run itself.

Finally, Ares will provide the runners with each of the following:

- One Artemis Nightwing for each runner; these are crucial to the Ares infiltration plan (see below).
- Pilot Aircraft activesofts for PCs that are skillsoft compatible; Pilot Rating 3 and Nightwing Maneuver Rating 3 Autosoft for PCs that are not skillsoft compatible. PCs with the Pilot Aircraft skill do not get either.
- Characters with the Automatics skill or Firearms skill group at 4 or more receive an Ares Alpha firearm. The underbarrel grenade launcher has been replaced with an underbarrel grapple gun, and the barrel has been fitted with a sound suppressor. The weapon is pre-loaded with APDS ammo.
- Characters with the Automatics skill or Firearms skill group at 3 or less receive a suppressed Ares Crusader machine pistol. The weapon is pre-loaded with Stick-n-Shock ammo.
- Characters with the Pistols skill or Firearms skill group at 3 or less receive an Ares Light Fire 75 pre-loaded with APDS ammo. This weapon replaces the Crusader (player's choice), but supplements the Alpha.
- As the run involves an exfiltration by stealing a Brackhaven Industries helicopter, if none of the runners have Pilot Aircaft or skillwires, Ares offers to install alphaware skillwires (Rating 3) in one of the runners at one of their cyber clinics. If the runners aren't interested (or just don't have a player with enough Essence left to get the augmentation), they'll need to seek an alternative exfiltration plan.
- If the team has a full magician, mystic adept, or hedge magician, that character is given a Quickened Potency 6, Force 6, Destruction Trigger alchemical preparation of an Increase Willpower spell, and a Quickened Potency 6, Force 6, Destruction Trigger alchemical preparation of an Armor spell.
- The team's decker is supplied with a Crystal Leviathan Shatterstar cyberdeck, a prototype created in collaboration between Ares subsidiaries Crystal Optics and Leviathan Technical. This cyberdeck is worth 500,000 nuyen so the decker had better return it after the run or be prepared to spend the rest of her life running from Ares. It has the following stats:

CRYSTAL LEVIATHAN SHATTERSTAR

RATING	ATT. ARRAY	PROGRAMS	AVAIL	COST
5	8 7 7 5	4	20R	500,000¥

THE MITSUHAMA OFFER

Mitsuhama offers the PCs a cool 100,000 nuyen to retrieve the data; they're certain they want Brackhaven replaced, whereas Ares is on the fence. The offer is extended by Kiyoko Inoue and is non-negotiable, although she will express a certain restrained degree of personal gratitude if the PCs happened to save her life, or something similar. Mitsuhama is unwilling to make an up-front payment, and having just gotten 200,000 nuyen, the runners shouldn't be in much of a position to ask for one.

Like Ares, Mitsuhama will provide equipment to help the runners out:

- One Artemis Nightwing for each runner; these are crucial to the Mitsuhama infiltration plan (see below).
- Pilot Aircraft activesofts for PCs that are skillsoft compatible; Pilot Rating 3 and Nightwing Maneuver Rating 3 autosoft for PCs that are not skillsoft compatible. PCs with the Pilot Aircraft skill do not get either.
- Characters with the Automatics skill or Firearms skill group at 4 or more receive a Yamaha Raiden assault rifle. The weapon is pre-loaded with APDS ammo.
- Characters with the Automatics skill, Pistols skill, or Firearms skill group at 3 or less receive a suppressed Yamaha Seiten machine pistol. The weapon is pre-loaded with APDS ammo.
- As the run involves an exfiltration accomplished by stealing a Brackhaven Industries helicopter, if none of the runners have Pilot Aircaft or skillwires, MCT offers to install betaware skillwires (Rating 4) in one of the runners at one of their cyber clinics. If the runners aren't interested (or just don't have a player with enough Essence left to get the augmentation) they'll need to seek an alternate exfiltration plan.
- If the team has a full magician, mystic adept, or hedge magician, that character is given a Quickened Potency 6, Force 6, Destruction Trigger alchemical preparation of an Increase Logic or Increase Charisma spell, depending on the character's magical tradition, and a Quickened Potency 6, Force 6, Destruction Trigger alchemical preparation of a Combat Senses spell. The mage is also given two doses of psyche (p. 412, *SR5*).
- The team's decker is supplied with a MCT Shuriken cyberdeck. MCT fully expects the deck to be returned at the completion of the run; the deck also features a clever system back-doored into it that sabotage any hacking attempts on MCT-owned subsystems and hosts: the entire deck and any programs running on it won't work against MCT interests. The MCT Shuriken has the same stats as the Sony CIY-720, p. 439, *SR5*. The decker is also given two doses of psyche.

Additionally, MCT can provide an equipment budget of 40,000 nuyen, and the corp is able to acquire anything the runners need with Availability 12 or less (or any MCT products the runners need with Availability 20 or less) within 24 hours. These items are the runners to keep if they (the runners *and* the gear) survive the run, but MCT will not give out anything that has no obvious purpose on the run itself.

THE PROJECT FREEDOM OFFER

Between them, Dana Oaks, Eliza Bloom, and MacCallister can offer only 50,000 nuyen to the PC team for the run. This isn't a matter of negotiation; they just don't have more money than that available. However, the runners will be making contacts in the Seattle shadows, making friends in the Ork Underground, and will even get a "get out of jail" card with Seattle's District Attorney. These intangibles really matter!

Project Freedom can't offer the same delicious free gear that Ares and Mitsuhama can. Their total equipment budget is only 50,000 nuyen, which the runners can divide up among any number of Availability 12 or less item. The only free gear they can offer the runners is an Artemis Nightwing for each runner; even Pilot skillsofts and autosofts for runners that can't fly will need to come out of the standard equipment budget.

One asset that Project Freedom can offer is the ork decker Tauren. Tauren slings a mean cyberdeck, is a good shot with a heavy pistol, and has experience running the Seattle shadows. He might provide the edge and Matrix muscle the runners need to pull the Brackhaven Investments infiltration off. An Ork Underground magician will also send a bound Force 6 spirit of man along to aid the runners however they need; its 6 services are theirs to use as they see fit.

ARES/MITSUHAMA INSERTION

While there would be no fun in Mr. Johnson planning out every detail of the run, Ares and Mitsuhama each have some helpful suggestions to get the runners started. The fact they came up with the same plan doesn't really need to be explained, because it is something the players will never know: if it makes you feel better, perhaps they leverage some of the same freelance black-ops strategists.

In any case, Ares and Mitsuhama each have more than enough cash to rent out the top level of the iconic Seattle Space Needle and the Eye of the Needle restaurant that occupies the rotunda level and observation deck after the restaurant closes for business for the night (11 p.m. on weekdays, 10 p.m. on Sundays, and 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays). Low-level company men will carefully cart up and assemble the Artemis Nightwing gliders on the observation deck for the runners to launch from there.

The Space Needle is located less than a dozen blocks from the Brackhaven Industries building, while the roof of the BI building is located a good twenty meters below the Space Needle observation deck. This makes the Space Needle an ideal launching point for a rooftop insertion. A service lift will be installed that runs up the outer spine of the Space Needle tower; marks for operating it will be registered on the team

decker's PAN. The runners can take the lift to the roof and take the Nightwings from there.

The runners should not plan on their ultralights surviving the landing onto the Brackhaven Industries roof, nor will taking off by glider again from the roof be easy, with the congested layout of the buildings in the downtown core. Getting out the front door most likely won't be a possibility either: the anti-Brackhaven protest out front (see below) has led to heightened security in the area, especially on the ground level. Instead, the runners should exfiltrate by stealing the Hughes Aerospace Airstar 2050 shuttle helicopter that will arrive the night of the run at 03:15, bringing VP Harold Muller to an important meeting with the Asian Real Estate Market division. The runners are to secure that helicopter while it is refueling and use it to escape with the files from the secure server; a Rating 6 disposable area jammer is provided to scramble the helicopter's tracking signal temporarily for a quick escape.

Ares, or Mitsuhama, has a boat (use the stats for the Morgan Cutlass on p. 465, *SR5*) waiting at a prearranged location in the Puget Sound, with its running lights and motor off. There is where the PCs will handoff the files for their payment. The helicopter is theirs to keep, but is most likely too hot to hang on to, and too specialized and expensive to sell. It is an albatross, and the PCs would be better off leaving it.

PROJECT FREEDOM INSERTION

Eliza Bloom has rented rooms 6112, 6114, and 6116 on the 61st floor of the downtown TripleTree hotel. MacCallister, meanwhile, has spoofed the camera feed from the three adjoining rooms, which conveniently face outwards and downwards on the Brackhaven Investments building. This has allowed Project Freedom operatives to covertly bring a pack of Artemis Nightwing gliders up to the hotel rooms, piece by piece, and assemble them there. The windows have been removed with aerosolized nanotech dissolvers by the time the PCs arrive; it's a straight shot by glider down and across to the roof of Brackhaven Investments.

LET'S START A RIOT

Since District Attorney Oaks empaneled a grand jury to go after Brackhaven, rarely has week passed in Seattle without allegations of Brackhaven's bigotry and corruption making the local news. Brackhaven's political opponents have arranged to drop a big bomb on the evening of the run, deliberately leaking the Operation Daybreak document to several Seattle news media outfits. While there is no hard evidence, the document itself is enough to piss off Seattle's metahumans and underclasses. With Project Freedom's careful urging, this will lead to the formation of a flash mob outside of Brackhaven investments, filled with angry metahuman demonstrators calling for Brackhaven's resignation. The governor will, in typical Brackhaven fashion, respond heavy-handedly, by calling out the Metroplex guard unit and the Knight Errant riot cops.

This riot will rage outside of Brackhaven Investments on the night of the run, from 8 p.m. until well after midnight, when the crowd begins throwing stones and attacking the police barricades and are eventually dispersed by a barrage of tear gas. While the demonstration will be visible in the background no matter who sponsors the PCs' run on Brackhaven investments, it is actually integral to the Project Freedom infiltration/exfiltration plan. Once the PCs have the secure files, they are to make their way down the lobby. There, Bull will give the order via mass text to escalate the riots, creating enough chaos and confusion for the runners to escape. Eliza Bloom will be waiting for the PCs back in the hotel lobby across the street.

SLOT AND RUN

Most of the challenges facing the runners in infiltrating the Brackhaven Investments Headquarters are detailed in **Places of Interest**, below. The actual files are located in a hidden and isolated partition in the mainframe of server room #8 on the 10th floor. The host they are on is shielded from the wireless network in a Faraday cage and can only be accessed via direct connection with a fiber-optic cable. Once inside the host, a decker or technomancer must make a Computer + Intuition (4) [Data Processing] Test to find the hidden files.

This is problematic on a whole other level besides keeping the intrusion into the server room from being discovered physically for a few minutes, as the Patrol IC in the host will find the decker given enough time. It rolls its rating x 2 (14 Dice) versus a running silent decker's Logic + Sleaze, and it spots deckers who aren't running silent automatically. Completing the search for the file before being spotted is very important.

Once the host spots the intruder, it begins launching increasingly vicious IC.

Turn 1: Probe
Turn 2: Killer
Turn 3: Acid
Turn 4: Binder
Turn 5: Blaster
Turn 6: Black IC

This is a tough challenge for any decker; unfortunately, the physical server is much too large to steal. Obtaining legal passcodes for accessing the system with someone else's account poses its own challenges, but that may be the way to go here, unless the decker is *very* confident in their skills.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

Infiltrating a AA corporation is already pretty challenging, but it's possible that the sailing here for the PCs will be too smooth thanks to the equipment and logistical support they're given by their patrons. If that happens, you may want to throw a curveball at them. And for curveball, read *dragon*.

Drexel is a freelance security consultant, a shadowrunner who works the defensive side of the street. He is also a young adult Western dragon, with winter-gray scales and a pale blue underbelly. He is currently contracting for Brackhaven Investments, who are apparently not above dealing with dragons when it suits them. While Drexel does not scare the

regulars by hanging around on-site when he is not needed, if the PCs set off any alarms (which they almost certainly will), Drexel will be sent in by his handlers.

The Western dragon will arrive just in time to see the PCs hijacking the Brackhaven Investments helicopter. He will pursue them, leading to a frantic and fiery chase over the skies of Seattle, and a fittingly epic climax to the adventure.

DREXEL

WESTERN DRAGON	
B A R S W L I C M EDG ESS	
11 7 6 40 8 8 8 8 10 6 10	
Initiative	16 + 2D6
Movement	15 / 40 (30 / 60 flight)
Condition Monitor	17/12
Limits	Physical 36, Mental 11, Social 10
Armor (Phys/Myst)	18H / 8H
Skills	Assensing 14, Conjuring skill group 12, Exotic Ranged Weapon 12, Flight 12, Perception 12, Sorcery skill group 14, Unarmed Combat 12
Powers	Dragonspeech, Dual Natured, Elemental Attack (usually Fire), Enhanced Senses (smell, low-light vision, thermographic vision, wide-band hearing), Hardened Armor (BOD), Hardened Mystic Armor (WIL), Natural Weapon (Bite/Claws: DV 42P, AP –4), Sapience
Individual Powers	Animal Control, Compulsion, Corrosive Saliva, Fear, Influence, Noxious Breath, Venom

Notes: All dragons have Magic abilities and know most spells. They also have +2 Reach.

DEBUGGING

The runners have all the tools at hand to succeed against the tough opposition here. Like any high-level infiltration, it's purely a matter of matching their wits against the security system's weaknesses. Their patron, whether Ares, Mitsuhama, or Project Freedom, has provided enough equalizers to give the PCs a fair chance of success. If the PCs start to crash and burn due to bad dice luck alone, to the point where their Edge spending can't overcome it, it may be appropriate to pull your punches and fudge some rolls. Especially if the PCs have their hearts in the right place in terms of tactics and strategy.

If, on the other hand, the PCs screw up, overlook the obvious, or fail to leverage teamwork, planning, coordination and the element of surprise appropriately, and begin to go down in flames, feel free to drop the hammer on them. Shadowrunning is not a safe profession: sometimes you get rich, but sometimes you get dead. If the PCs try a full frontal assault or equally bone-headed tactic, feel free to let them reap the rewards they so richly deserve.

PLACES OF INTEREST

BRACKHAVEN INVESTMENTS

3rd Avenue & Union Street

It's not on the local tours, but the downtown offices of Brackhaven Investments are tied in with the lifeblood of the metroplex: namely financial data. BI manages a wide range of investment portfolios and provides financial information to its clients. The place often seems a bit out of sync with the rest of the city just because it is so attuned to the activities of the world markets, with so many people working literally in different time zones for most of the business day. For this reason, Brackhaven Investments doesn't have "business hours" and "off hours." Middle-managers, bankers, accountants, and other corporate wage-slave office drones work in overlapping shifts at all hours.

Physically, Brackhaven Investments is a fifty-five-story glass-and-steel skyraker that sits squarely on the northeast corner of 3rd Avenue and Union Street in Seattle's Downtown Core. To the north and east it abuts other buildings; its main entrance opens west onto 3rd Avenue. The fifty-plus floors of corporate office space above are dedicated entirely to Brackhaven Investments. They break down as follows:

Sublevels B3-B1: Employee parking.

Ground Floor: This large lobby provides access to all of the building's elevators and also handles the bulk of Brackhaven's public retail banking, which is not where most of its business is. Management and security offices are also located on this floor.

Levels 1–2: These floors contain a gym, spa, retail shops, and a cafe for Brackhaven Investments employees, along with security officers.

Levels 3-5: These floors are dedicated to back-office retail banking and consumer banking. Most ordinary, low-priority investors meet with their analysts here.

Levels 6–10: These floors contain Brackhaven's communications hubs and IT department, connecting Brackhaven Investments to the global marketplace. The files that constitute Corrigan's insurance policy are hidden in a server room on the tenth floor.

Levels 11–15: Given over to office space for wholesale banking.

Levels 16–20: Office space for wholesale banking and consumer banking operations.

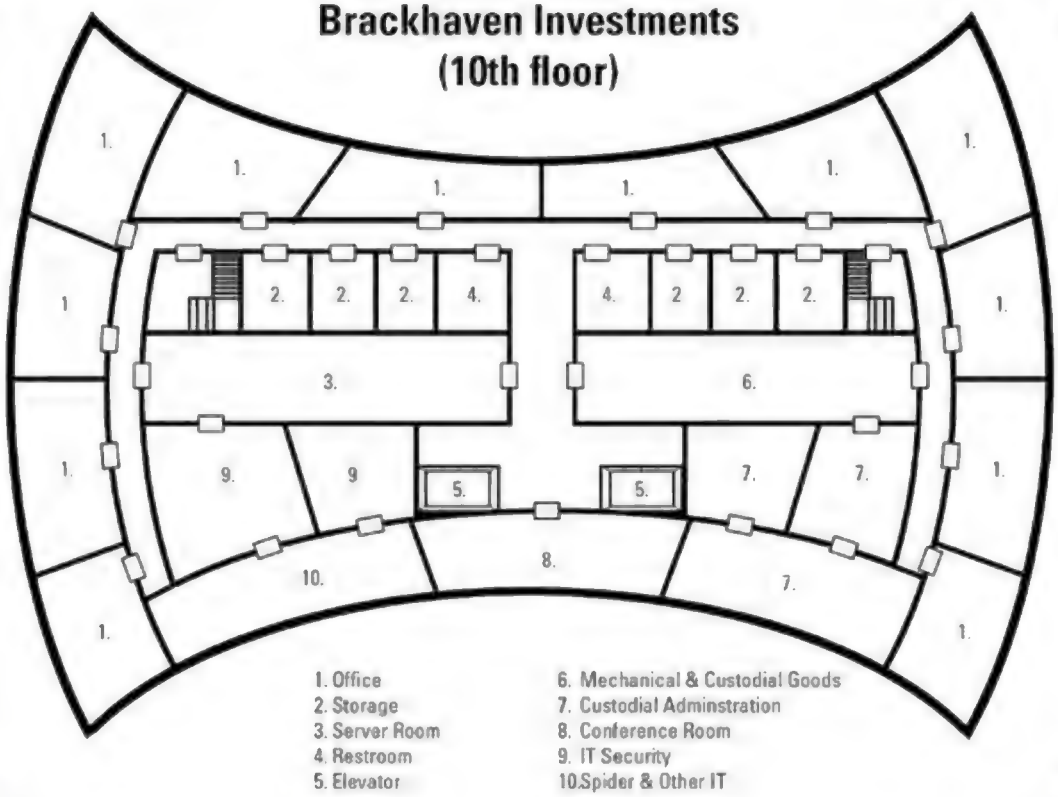
Levels 21–25: Consumer banking operations.

Levels 26-30: CEO & Executive meeting rooms, support function, banking services, and operational risk offices take up these floors.

Levels 31-35: These floors are taken up by Brackhaven's corporate relationship offices, which liaison with BI's major corporate clients.

Level 36-40: More corporate relationship, private banking, and consumer banking offices.

Level 41-45: This level is used by BI's human resources and organizational learning departments.



Level 46-55: Executive offices and board meeting rooms. Brackhaven's office is located on the top floor.

PHYSICAL SECURITY FEATURES

The exterior walls are constructed of Structure Rating 13, Armor Rating 18 concrete and metal beams, except the glass panels, which are made of polarized ballistic glass (Structure Rating 9, Armor Rating 9). The interior walls, which are not load bearing, are made of composite hardwood and plaster (Structure Rating 7, Armor Rating 7). Most doors have Structure and Armor Ratings of 5, but high security doors in some places have Structure and Armor Ratings of 9, and vault doors have Structure and Armor Ratings of 12, although no actual vaults of physical currency are on the premises. Not much actual cash flows through its retail banking operation, and what little does is not stored here.

Brackhaven Investment employs security guards from Stoddard Security, a firm with very apt initials. Stringently racist goons and thugs, the average Stoddard Security employee is a professional leg-breaker who despises metahumans and takes great pleasure in hassling them. Brackhaven Industries is Stoddard Security's single largest client, and sixty-three Stoddard Security guards are on staff there at all times. Eight work the ground floor lobby, four more are stationed on the first and second floors, and another eighteen occupy the security offices and lounge on the ground floor. The remaining thirty are stationed evenly between the security stations located on the fifth, tenth, fifteenth, twentieth, twenty-fifth, thirtieth, thirty-fifth, fortieth, forty-fifth, fiftieth, and fifty-fifth floors. There are three security guards on each of these floors. Stats for average Stoddard Security employees and lieutenants, along with their armaments, appear below in **Grunts and Moving Targets;** there is approximately one lieutenant for every five rank-and-file guards.

There are no less than 28 individual elevators in the building, most of them accessible from the central elevator bank in the lobby. The eight low-rise elevators provide access from the lobby through floor 14, while six mid-low rise elevators provide access from the lobby to floors 15-35, but nothing above or below that. The six mid-rise elevators provide access from the lobby to floors 36-45, but nothing above or below that. The six high-rise elevators provide access from Floor 45 to all floors above that. Finally, two garage elevators shuttle visitors between the lobby and the three parking sublevels below. All elevators are maglock activated after "normal business hours" (see below) and can be controlled centrally from the security hub office on the first floor (again, see below).

So that important executives don't get confused and die while trying to elevator down from the top level to the bottom, in the event of a fire or other emergency, Brackhaven

Investments also features emergency stairwells. There are two emergency exit stairwells in the building: they descend the entire height of the building, located on the northwest and southwest corners of the building's core. One stairwell, the southwest one, provides roof access; the roof access door is locked with a standard security maglock (see below).

TECHNICAL SECURITY FEATURES

The main entrance of Brackhaven Investments, on the ground floor, opens on a foyer that funnels all visitors through a row of Rating 4 magnetic anomaly detectors. Except for senior executives and security personnel, weapons are not allowed on the premises, and this is a policy that is strictly enforced. At the close of BI's (entirely nominal) "normal business hours" at 8 p.m., all street-level entrances are maglocked with cardreader access control. Nearly all interior doors are kept locked, except the ones that contain nothing of importance, such as lavatories. The outdoor maglocks, most general elevator maglocks, and most indoor maglocks, are Device Rating 3 and include Rating 1 anti-tamper systems. Some maglocks are high-security maglocks that are Device Rating 5 and equipped with Rating 2 anti-tamper systems. This includes most of the floors between 45 and 55, along with any specific door locks indicated in the description below that differ from the norm.

All employees have the appropriate maglock passkeys for the main entrance, the appropriate elevator for accessing the floor they work on from the lobby, and the appropriate elevator for accessing the lobby from the parking sublevels, and vice versa, along with a maglock passkey coded to allow them access to their office and any common areas on their floor they need to use.

There are 570 closed-circuit security cameras (Device Rating 3) connected to Brackhaven Investments' security hub, averaging out to more than 10 cameras per floor. It would be utterly exhausting to detail the location of all of them, but they are dotted throughout the lobby, parking garage, and all office levels, and designed to have overlapping coverage in high security/high traffic areas (such as the lobby). There are four security cameras located on the roof, and the area just inside the southeast stairwell from the rooftop access door is secured with a grid of infrared trip beams (p. 364, *SR5*).

The roof is also equipped with a pop-up emergency anti-aircraft turret, at the governor's request. The turret contains a pair of linked anti-aircraft guns (Acc 6, DV 15P, AP -5, SA, RC 1, 60 rounds of ammunition in each gun) w/ Pilot Rating 4 and Targeting (Heavy Weapons) Rating 4 autosofts. The turret is Device Rating 5, which means it can be hacked wirelessly. That would be a wise move for anyone attempting an unauthorized landing on the roof.

The glass panes of all exterior windows are woven with alarm circuits; if the windows are broken or damaged, or the alarm circuits detect vibrations (like those that would result from an explosion), a general alert will be sounded. Alarms are also built into most doors as well as all high-security doors, and they will be tripped if the doors are forced. Finally, all high-security areas, unused offices, and server rooms are secured with motion sensors (p. 365, *SR5*) at all times they are unoccupied; unauthorized motion provoke a security response.

A panic button is located behind the security kiosk in the main lobby: if triggered, it will bring Knight Errant rapid response teams (use the Police Patrol on p. 383, *SR5*) and reinforcements from Stoddard Security. This alarm will also be sent out automatically if any of the building's maglock anti-tamper systems, alarms, or Matrix security measures detect an intruder.

The building is equipped with a sophisticated life safety system composed of a complete sprinkler system for fire protection, a fire alarm and detection system, and an emergency control station that provides the utmost in office safety. Chemical fire extinguishers are located in the server rooms, replacing the traditional sprinklers. A voice communication station provides one-way communication between the emergency control system and all floors. The fire safety control system will automatically shut off the air-handling unit on the alarm floor and activate the toilet exhaust fans and stairwell pressurization fans. The fire control system is controlled directly from the building's Matrix host.

MAGICAL SECURITY FEATURES

Stoddard Security's magical assets are less than impressive, so Brackhaven Industries reinforces its building's astral security with a pair of wage mages contracted out from Lone Star Security Services. Two Lone Star wage mages are on duty at all time in the security office on the first floor. Each mage also has two bound Force 5 spirits, a fire elemental and a water elemental, to call on at any time, with each bound spirit owing the mage three services. These mages are on-call, but neither they nor their spirits are actively patrolling at all time (in order to conserve services). A mage will only make an astral sweep or send a spirit to patrol a level if some other part of the security system indicates something is amiss. Even in those circumstances, the mages will stick their neck out in the astral or send spirits, but they are hesitant to actually put themselves in a position where they might be shot.

An immense Force 5 ward has been erected around the external walls of the entire fifty-five-story tower. Astrally projecting forms are unable to pass through the ward. A separate Force 10 ward protects Governor Brackhaven's office, specifically.

MATRIX SECURITY FEATURES

In addition to hundreds if not thousands of devices (each individual door lock, motion sensor, camera, and so on is an individual device that can be hacked individually, with an individual Device Rating, along with the thousands of dataterminals and commlinks the room contains, two hosts are tied to Brackhaven Investments. There is the Brackhaven Security Host, which controls all of the building's physical security features (it is tied to every one of the many, many individual cameras, locks, and sensors) and the Brackhaven data host, which controls and monitors the thousands of financial data transactions that go into and out of Brackhaven Investments every few seconds. Like all hosts, neither of these

hosts has a physical location, and both can be accessed from anywhere on the Matrix, although the offline nature of the target server will require the team's decker to be physically present to jack into it. Both hosts are Host Rating 7.

The data host is actually the more secure of the two, and the PCs do not have to deal with until they access the server, as described above in **Slot And Run**. The Data Host is also the more obvious of the two, as the entire Security Host is running silent. To spot it, a character must succeed a Matrix Perception test versus its dice pool of 14. However, the Security Host (and all IC on it) receive a -2 dice pool penalty to all actions due to running silent.

SECURITY HOST (RUNNING SILENT; -2 TO ALL MATRIX ACTIONS)

Iconography: A medieval fortress with towering stone walls and armed guards; portcullis checkpoints, and arrow notches and murder holes correspond to individual cameras and sensors. The central keep is the CPU, and IC constructs take the form of mailed knights and robed wizards, while data constructs shaped like courier birds deliver packages of data.

ATTACK	DATA PROC.	FIREWALL	SLEAZE
9	8	10	7

Security Response:

Always Running: Patrol IC
Turn 1: Marker
Turn 2: Crash
Turn 3: Blaster
Turn 4: Acid
Turn 5: Track
Turn 6: Black IC

Note: All of the security devices in the building are connected to the security host. Individually, they are much easier to hack. However the Security Host can control *all* of them. If any individual device manages to get a mark on an attempted Matrix intruder, it shares that mark with the security host and alerts the security host, which will launch one IC program for each failed attempt to Sleaze an individual device connected to the security system.

DATA HOST

Iconography: The Brackhaven Investments host is sculpted to look like a surreal dream of the perfect Main Street USA that never was. Perfectly manicured lawns, glistening suburban tract homes and endlessly looping cul-de-sacs beneath a sprawling sky of denim blue and cotton swab clouds. The center of the neighborhood is the quaint Brackhaven Manor; data constructs take the form of bicycling 1950s paperboys, mailmen, and milk men, while IC constructs look like circling falcons, family dogs, and friendly cops.

ATTACK	DATA PROC.	FIREWALL	SLEAZE
7	10	8	9

Security Response:

Always Running: Patrol IC
Turn 1: Probe
Turn 2: Killer
Turn 3: Acid
Turn 4: Binder
Turn 5: Blaster
Turn 6: Black IC

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

STODDARD SECURITY GUARD (S0)

PROFESSIONAL RATING 2

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5	3	3	5	3	2	3	2	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Clubs 4, Etiquette 3, Perception 3, Pistols 4, Running 4, Unarmed Combat 5
Gear	Armor jacket [w/ Nonconductivity 3], Sony Emperor commlink
Weapons	Browning Ultra Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10(c), w/ laser sight] Defiance EX-Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)] Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9Se, AP –5]

STODDARD SECURITY (10)

PROFESSIONAL RATING 2

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS
5	5	4 (6)	4	3	3	4	3	4.7

Initiative	9 + 1D6 (11 + 1D6)
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	12
Skills	Athletics skill group 2, Close Combat Skill group 6, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Longarms 4, Perception 5, Pistols 6, Sneaking 3
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, low-light vision, thermographic vision, smartlink], reaction enhancers 2
Gear	Armor jacket [w/ Nonconductivity 3], Renraku Sensei commlink, 2 doses of jazz
Weapons	Browning Ultra Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (6), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 10(c), w/ laser sight] Defiance EX-Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)] Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, Acc 4 (6), DV 10P, AP –1, SS/SA, RC —, 5(m), w/ ext. smartgun system] Stun baton [Club, Acc 4, Reach 1, DV 9Se, AP –5]

LONE STAR SECURITY SERVICES WAGE MAGE

PROFESSIONAL RATING 3	
B A R S W L I C M ESS	
2 4 3 3 6 5 4 4 5 (6) 3	
Initiative	7 + 1D6
Astral Initiative	8 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	11
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	9
Skills	Assensing 5, Astral Combat 5, Conjuring skill group 6, Counterspelling 5, Leadership 3, Pistols 4, Spellcasting 4
Spells	Armor, Combat Sense, Detect Guns, Detect Life, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Physical Barrier, Powerbolt, Stunball, Stunbolt
Bound Spirits	Force 5 Fire Elemental (3 Services), Force 5 Water Elemental (3 Services)
Gear	Armor vest, goggles [Rating 3 w/ image link, low-light vision, flare compensation], Renraku Sensei commlink, Power focus (Force 1)
Weapons	Defiance EX-Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)]

PICKING UP THE PIECES

MONEY

- 1,000¥ apiece for bringing Oxycode's commlink to Mr. Johnson.
- 100,000¥ for the team to split up (taken off of Seth Dietrich's body).
- 200,000¥ for the PCs to split up if they sold Dietrich's commlink to Ares or Mitsuhama; 80,000¥ for the team to split up if they sold the commlink to Project Freedom, and 400,000¥ for the PCs to split up if they sold the commlink to Zane.
- 80,000¥ for the PCs to split up if they did the Brackhaven Industries data steal for Ares or Mitsuhama.
- 50,000¥ for the PCs to split up if they did the Brackhaven Industries data steal for Project Freedom.

KARMA

- 2 Karma for each character that survived the adventure.
- 1 Karma for stealing Oxycode's commlink.
- 2 Karma if the PCs actually managed to defeat most of the Chimera assassins.
- 1 Karma for selling Dietrich's commlink to Ares or Mitsuhama, 2 Karma for selling Dietrich's commlink to Project Freedom, and 0 Karma if the PCs sold the commlink to Zane.
- 2 Karma for completing the Brackhaven Investments run.
- 1 Karma for escaping or defeating Drexel.
- 4 Karma for the overall difficulty of the opposition throughout the adventure.
- Individual Karma awards the gamemaster feels the players earned.

REPUTATION

- PCs that sold the commlink to Project Freedom gain a point of Street Cred, while PCs that sold the commlink to Zane gain a point of Notoriety.
- PCs that completed the Brackhaven Investments run a relatively quiet fashion receive a point of Street Cred; PCs that completed the BI run in a way that involved running gun battles and huge explosions gain a point each of Street Cred, Notoriety, and Public Awareness.
- Runners who engaged in a gun battle at the zoo, or any other public place, receive a point of Notoriety and a point of Public Awareness for each public location in which they enter a pitched battle.
- PCs that kill any member of the Black Knights gain a point of Street Cred and a point of Notoriety.

CONTACTS

- All PCs that managed to steal Oxycode's commlink gain Imaginary Annie as a contact at Loyalty 1.
- PCs that particularly impress Karen King or Kiyoko Inoue gain them as contacts at Loyalty 1. Simply selling Ares or Mitsuhama the commlink is not nearly enough, the PCs must save their lives or something equivalent, and act thoroughly professional throughout the entire interaction.
- PCs receive MacCallister, Eliza Bloom, and/or Tosh Athack as Contacts at Loyalty 1 if they sell the commlink to Project Freedom. The loyalty of these contacts increases by 1 if the PCs manage to complete the Brackhaven Investments run with Tauren, and they also gain Tauren as a contact at Loyalty 2.

CANON, CHOICES, AND CONSEQUENCES

As is readily apparent, there are four distinct ways this adventure can end. While the exact fate of Governor Kenneth Brackhaven's corrupt and racist regime, and the future of his political career, will eventually be revealed in future *Shadowrun* products, the events in this adventure could affect how his career turns out. Even if the PCs chose to sell the information to Zane so that Brackhaven can quash it, there are other ways that the truth about Operation Daybreak and the rest of Brackhaven's serious misconduct can come to light. They might have gained some allies in the Brackhaven camp, but they might not be able to prevent the looming scandals from coming to light. Likewise, if, in your campaign, the runners sold the information to Ares who chose to sit on it in order to strengthen their stranglehold on Brackhaven, it is possible for Mitsuhama or Project Freedom to have gotten evidence through different channels.

Even without any truly damning evidence surfacing as a result of Seth Dietrich's dying efforts, the current political scandal that sees Brackhaven sitting before a grand jury panel may mean his days in office are numbered. Of course, no matter how much comes to light, it is possible that Brackhaven will somehow be able to spin things so that he eludes justice yet again. Regardless of the eventual canonical outcome, it is always within your prerogative to have the events in your campaign determine a resolution that differs from the published one.

LEGWORK

When a PC gets in touch with an appropriate contact, make a Connection + Connection Test for the contact. The results of this test determine how many ranks of information the contact knows about the subject in question. The PC then rolls Charisma + Etiquette + Loyalty and receives a number of levels of information for free from the contact equal to the hits they rolled (up to the limit of what the contact knows). If the contact knows more than he's saying for free, additional information is available for a payment of 250 nuyen per level.

If the PCs have worked all of their contacts and are still missing important information, they may request that a contact ask around. If they do, have the contact make an Extended Connection + Connection (1 hour) Test. Additional information is available at the cost of 750 nuyen per level.

SETH DIETRICH

CORPORATE CONTACT

Search	Information
0–1	Sounds German, maybe someone at Saeder-Krupp? Not ringing any bells.
2-3	He's an FBI Agent, talented hacker, but too dumb or stubborn to work for someone with real money. He's been sniffing around Kenneth Brackhaven, Congressman James Grey, and Humanis, trying to make connections between some very nasty individuals and the highest echelons of power.
4+	Allegedly, Dietrich caught onto something big. Something that could bring down Governor Brackhaven. A lot of Seattle's corporate powers-that-be are heavily invested in Brackhaven's regime. The rest would like to see him ousted. All of them would kill to get their hands on whatever this Dietrich's turned up.

SETH DIETRICH

STREET OR CRIMINAL CONTACT

Search	Information
0–1	Isn't that the name of the bassist for Reichschwer, that Nazi metal band?
2-3	A G-man. Around the time of the Ork Underground controversy blew up last year, he was hitting the shadows hard, trying to dig up dirt on Brackhaven.
4	I heard he was getting close to something that would bury Brackhaven. Then the guys he was working with got geeked. Their bodies

	turned up floating in Puget Sound. Dietrich's body wasn't found, though.
5+	When he was last around town, Dietrich was teamed up with a whole Shadowrunner crew. He'd gone native. He was wandering around with an ork decker named Tauren, a shaman called Three Feet, a street sam named Bingo, and a rigger named Dice. They're all dead now, except for Tauren.

SETH DIETRICH

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACT

Search	Information
0	That's above my pay grade, chummer.
1	FBI Special Agent, fed hacker, real boy scout. Do-gooder, white knight, ass-kicker for the forces of good, law, and order. He's been off the grid for almost a year now.
2	He's ex UCAS Army CID. Made his bones infiltrating this gang of Matrix thieves, the code-snatchers, that was stealing airliners out of Sea-Tac back in '70.
3-4	Around last year, in November, he'd was digging up serious dirt on Governor Brackhaven. Word is that he flew too close to the fire and got burned.
5+	Look, you ask me, I think Dietrich is still alive, still putting together his dossier, his insurance policy, and still looking for the perfect way to see Brackhaven hang without getting geeked in the process. The fact he's fallen off the grid just goes to show that he doesn't even trust the bureau any more. But every fed I know still venerates the guy, hardcore. He's their hero.

OPERATION DAYBREAK

STREET OR CRIMINAL CONTACT

Search	Information
0-2	Is that the new sim about Chase Talloway, sexy vampire hunter?
3-4	I've heard the guys in the Ork Underground talk about it. Maybe something to do with the fire that was started down there a couple years back. A lot of the OU blames Brackhaven for the attacks, but they've never been able to prove it.
5+	Ah, that's a conspiracy theory file I've seen floating around on the shadownets. It alleges that before the Proposition 23 vote, Brackhaven was going to assassinate a bunch of Ork Underground community leaders, then hire a bunch of runners to frame a crime wave on the Underground to justify cracking down on them harder with Knight Errant. It's a pretty popular theory in a certain set, and I wouldn't put it past Brackhaven. But if it's going to stick, someone needs to find some proof.

OPERATION DAYBREAK

CORPORATE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACT

Search	Information
0-2	Well, the Matrix tells me that's the name of an old flatvid WWII movie. Other than that, I've got nothing.
3-5	A plan Governor Brackhaven allegedly came up with, a sort of "final solution" to the "meta problem." It's only floated around totally discredited shadownets and VPNs, so it hasn't penetrated the public consciousness yet. If Brackhaven could be definitively tied to it, it might mean the end of his career.
6+	Allegedly, a fed named Dietrich grabbed this file called "Operation Daybreak" from the safehouse of one of Brackhaven's high-ranking bully boys. If it's real, it's beyond damning. I've heard that Dietrich uploaded it to a VPN called JackPoint, and they've just been sitting on it.

MATRIX LEGWORK

A Matrix Search action (p. 241, *SR5*) may also be used to gather information. Have the character making the search roll a Simple Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] Test. In this case, the character receives a -1 dice pool penalty because this information is considered intricate and specialized. The threshold of the test and the time required both depend on the secrecy of the information in question, although a Browse program cuts the base time in half. The number of net hits rolled determines the degree of information gained.

SETH DIETRICH

MATRIX SEARCH: THRESHOLD 3 (NOT PUBLICIZED), BASE TIME 30 MINUTES

Net Hits	Information
Failure	Seattle directory listings have no one of that name. Closest match is Dietrich Slade.
0 (Success)	The UCAS Federal Bureau of Investigation lists Dietrich as an employee working out of the Seattle Field Office. He's received numerous commendations for valor and success in his field operations, and his name shows up in press clippings from 2070, when he apprehended a gang of Matrix thieves known as the Code Slingers.
1	Dietrich's status is listed as MIA in the internal database. It has been since November of 2074. At the time, he was investigating a conspiracy involving Governor Brackhaven.
2+	Around November of last year, Seth Dietrich uploaded a file that appeared on several data havens, including JackPoint and ShadowSEA. The file linked Seattle Governor Kenneth Brackhaven to a criminal conspiracy against the Ork Underground. Notes accompanying the posting indicate that Dietrich went missing immediately after it was uploaded.

OPERATION DAYBREAK

MATRIX SEARCH: THRESHOLD 4 (HIDDEN), BASE TIME 1 HOUR

Net Hits	Information
Failure	The name of an old flatvid film, and an upcoming vampire sim, but that's about it.
0 (Success)	A popular (among nut jobs, at least) conspiracy theory that states that Governor Kenneth Brackhaven wanted to fund a genocide of the Ork Underground to stop Prop 23, or something like that. No one who anyone takes seriously takes it seriously.
1	A "File 4462" found on conspiracy sites is allegedly written by Kenneth Brackhaven's operatives and outlines the plan for something called "Operation Daybreak." The operation is intended "to prevent the passage of Proposition 23 by highlighting the dangers of Ork Underground". According to the file, this will be achieved by "hiring operatives to commit random and various crimes and plant evidence framing Project Freedom," as well as "preventing the truth from coming out by eliminating members of Project Freedom" using deniable assets, in order to "increase the public level of fear and hatred against Project Freedom and the Ork Underground." The file is becoming increasingly difficult to find.
2+	The file originated on an elite shadow VPN known as JackPoint. The poster was the Seattle fixer MacCallister, known around those parts as the hacker Bull, but the original finder of the document is supposed to be a Fed: FBI Agent Seth Dietrich.

CAST OF SHADOWS

AGENT SETH DIETRICH

Seth Dietrich was recruited by the UCAS Army out of high school, motivated by the rarest of drives: genuine patriotism and a selfless desire to serve his country. His incredible technical aptitude soon moved him to the army's Criminal Investigation Division, where he rose quickly through the cybercrimes unit. When his tour of duty in the military was complete, his impressive résumé was more than enough to secure him a position in the UCAS Federal Bureau of Investigation. At that point, Dietrich's hacking talents and potential were substantial enough that he had offers from several AAA megacorps, but he elected to enter civil service instead, seeing the crime and corruption the megacorps dirtied their hands in daily and not wanting to associate himself with that. He was a fantastically successful agent until his investigation of Kenneth Brackhaven's murderously underhanded dealings became an obsession.

As the files and notes written by Special Agent Dietrich in the **Player Handouts** section show, Dietrich went rogue

to a degree, working with shadow elements as he drove closer and closer to the terrible truth about Brackhaven and Operation Daybreak, and closer and closer to terrible danger. Dietrich twice survived aggressive attempts by Brackhaven's operatives on his life. The second time, the entire team of shadowrunners he was working with was killed. What's worse, he acquired the virus that causes the new condition known as cognitive fragmentation disorder.

During his time as a golden boy in first the UCAS Army CID and then the UCAS FBI, Dietrich received a suite of state-of-the-art, bleeding edge headware and nanoware upgrades. These cortical nanite systems, unfortunately, with their neural-network level complexity, play a perfect host for the CFD virus. Dietrich's head is now "haunted" by multiple e-ghost personalities, but note that the original people on whom the e-ghosts are based are not all necessarily dead. They are just people whose memories and personalities have been digitized and uploaded at one time or another, with or without their knowledge or consent. The alternate personalities that can possess Dietrich at any time include, but aren't limited to:

- Jake Armitage, a data courier and shadowrunner active in the 2050s. Armitage's entire personality matrix was uploaded when he confronted (and successfully destroyed) a rogue artificial intelligence being developed by the Aneki corporation twenty five years ago, an AI with dubious and vague connections to Renraku and the later emergence of artificial intelligence known as Deus. A seasoned operative, Armitage is a fish out of water in the technological world of 2075, and the rise of commlinks, wireless, and AR are nearly as baffling to him as waking up in another man's body.
- Robert Lionel Bannickburn, an elven mage who, decades ago, faced a near-death experience and magical burn-out after a nasty ambush in the Scottish Toxic Zones. This happened, conveniently, right in the background of then-independent AA corp Transys Neuronet, who had a vested interest in consciousness uploading after the Imago incident. Their nearby team removed Bannickburn's unconscious body for scanning, excited at the opportunity to upload the mind of a newly helpless Awakened individual. Whatever happened to the real Bannickburn, this fork of his personality is still coming to grips with his newfound powerlessness and is absorbed nearly as much with bitterness as he is with confusion.
- Xa Firebird, an undercover Lone Star narcotics detective who had infiltrated the First Nations gang as a lieutenant during the first emergence of tempo back in 2071. Firebird was killed by shadowrunners working for the Komun'go Seoulpa Ring, which was supplying the First Nations with a tempo pipeline, because the runners had discovered Firebird's true identity—and because he was aware of theirs. Firebird had several high-tech headware implants similar to Dietrich's, making the mesh between their consciousness easier. Firebird is the only imprinted personality in Dietrich's head that is most definitely dead. He seems to be eerily aware of his ghost status—and bitter about it.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
3	4 (6)	4 (6)	3 (5)	5	5 (8)	6	4	1*	2.2

Initiative	10 + 1D6 (12 + 3D6)
Condition Monitor	10 / 11
Limits	Physical 5 (7), Mental 7 (9), Social 5
Armor	9
Skills	Athletics skill group 3 (6), Automatics 3, Cracking skill group 8, Electronics skill group 6, Influence skill group 5, Interrogation 4, Longarms 3, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols (Semi-Automatics) 7 (+2), Stealth skill group 6
Knowledge Skills	Corporate Rumors 5, Crime Syndicates 6, FBI Procedures 8, Illegal Goods 5, Law 7, Law Enforcement 8, Local Politics 6, Mob Politics 5, Psychology 8, Seattle Area Knowledge 5, Street Rumors 6
Qualities	Analytical Mind, Astral Chameleon, Codeslinger (Hack On The Fly), First Impression, CFD victim**
Augmentations	All deltaware: Cerebral booster 3, 4 datajacks, muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, nanoware suite***, skillwires 6, synaptic booster 2, synthacardium 3, ultrasound sensor
Gear	Lined Coat (w/ Nonconductivity 5), Transys Avalon commlink w/ subvocal microphone and trodes, credstick pouch worth 100,000¥
Weapons	Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6, DV 7P, AP –5, SA, RC —, 14(c), w/ APDS ammo]

Notes: *Dietrich's Edge used to be 6, but he has been forced to invoke Hand of God several times.

** New quality for characters suffering from cognitive fragmentation disorder. This quality is not currently available to PCs. For gameplay purposes, its only effect is to occasionally make Dietrich switch personalities.

*** *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* rules for nanotechnology will appear in a future sourcebook. You would not want Dietrich's nanoware suite anyway, as it infected with the CFD virus.

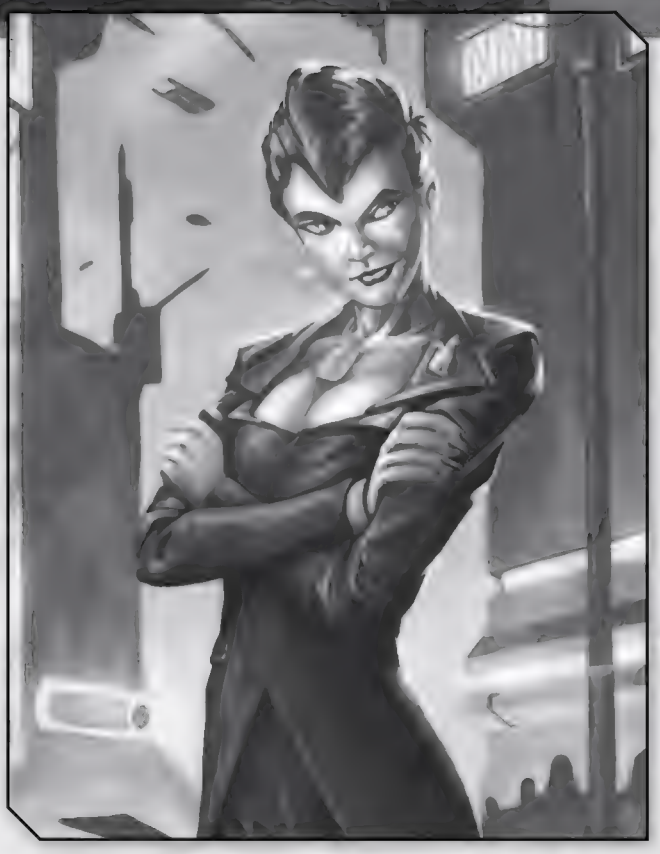
Dietrich has a pretty crackin' cyberdeck, but he does not bring it with him when he meets the PCs, so they will unfortunately be unable to loot it.

COGNITIVE FRAGMENTATION DISORDER

The condition known as cognitive fragmentation disorder will be covered in much more detail in future *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* products. To run *Splintered State*, all you need to know is that it is a technologically propagated computer virus that can directly influence human brainwaves in a manner superficially similar to simsense, changing thoughts, overwriting memories, and altering behavior patterns.

The exact origins of the CFD virus will be revealed elsewhere, but its genesis lies in the various secret megacorp research into scanning, uploading, analyzing, and imprinting digital consciousness (e-ghosts) that happened throughout the early 2070s, including NeoNET's Project Imago. When the Second Crash happened, many Matrix users were killed instantly by dumpshock and biofeedback, only for their friends to recognize them still logged in to the new wireless Matrix as mysterious ghosts in the machine. Some such e-ghosts, such as the dragon hacker Eliohann (going by the Matrix handles of Neurosis and Cerberus), even picked up their lives where they'd left off. Meanwhile, the chaos of the Second Crash and the Jormungandr virus fragmented several of the major AIs into smaller "feral" AIs.

The CFD virus first emerged in the digital storage tanks of a corporate facility. Imagine a handful of other people's ghosts, thrown into a blender. Put the blender on puree, and then pour the finely chopped ghost slurry directly into every nook and cranny of your brain. That's what it is like to have cognitive fragmentation disorder.



'IMAGINARY' ANNIE GOLDSMITH, INVISIBLE ESQUIRE

Annie Goldsmith was an orphan struggling to survive on the brutally mean streets of Seattle when she heard Cat calling to her, singing a song of power. Cat loved her for who she was: for the first time her sticky fingers, light feet, and sharp tongue were assets, not reasons to be scorned. Honing her talents as a burglar and con artist, Annie ran into trouble with the law time and time again. She noticed a major problem in the legal system, which is that all too seldom were criminal lawyers really able to identify, sympathize with, and get behind the needs of their clients, most of whom were in fact criminals.

Annie decided the way to rectify this was that more criminals should become lawyers, and she led the charge herself. Since then, she has been a very successful criminal defense attorney and fixer; she's stayed off of the radar of major law enforcement, but those in the know in the Seattle shadows will often recommend her as a go-to gal for criminal defense or the general shady dealings that may well lead to a need for a good criminal attorney.

FEMALE HUMAN, CONNECTION RATING 4

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	EDG	ESS
3	3 (4)	4	3	4	4	5	6	4	3	6

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10 / 10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 8
Armor	8
Skills	Con 6 (10), Electronics skill group 1, Etiquette 4 (8), Gymnastics 3 (5), Hacking 3, Impersonation 2 (6), Negotiation 4 (8), Perception 4 (6), Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols (Tasers) 4 (+2), Stealth skill group 4 (6), Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Criminal Law 6, Fences 5, Law Enforcement 4, Local Politics 3, Psychology 2, Seattle Area Knowledge 3, Street Rumors 4
Qualities	Adept, Addiction (Moderate, petty theft), Allergy (Common, Mild, pollen), Catlike, Mentor Spirit (Cat), Prejudice (Biased, cops)
Adept Powers	Enhanced Perception 2, Improved Ability (Palming) 2, Improved Physical Attribute (Agility) 1, Kinesics 4, Qigong 2
Gear	Actioneer business suit [w/ Nonconductivity 4, Shock Frills], bug scanner (Rating 5), data tap, electronics tool kit, Erika Elite commlink w/ subvocal microphone, fake SIN (Rating 4), fake concealed carry permit (Rating 4), gecko tape gloves, glasses (Rating 4, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision), grapple gun with 100m stealth rope, white noise generator (Rating 5), Wuxing Breezer subcompact
Weapons	Fichetti Tiffani Needler [Hold-out, Acc 5, DV 8P(f), AP +5, SA, RC —, 4(c)]

DISTRICT ATTORNEY DANA OAKS

District Attorney Dana Oaks had a good home life, loving parents, went to good schools, and graduated from Yale Law School. Her life seems to be an open book, and there are no skeletons in her closet. She is one of the youngest district attorneys in Seattle's history and is relentless and single-minded in her pursuit of justice. Since she began working with Knight Errant's Special Crimes unit, targeting organized crime, specifically smuggling, drug, and gun rings, she was very vocal in her frustration with the Ork Underground and the fact that it's a major pipeline into the city for criminal elements. Oaks even urged city officials to do everything they could to shut down the Underground to "plug a serious threat to Seattle's public safety," although her reasons came from a very different place than Brackhaven's: a love of justice and a hatred of criminality, rather than racism and privilege. Since becoming district attorney after the assassination of her predecessor by terrorists, Oaks has found herself in a strange position. The receipt of Dietrich's dirt on Brackhaven led to her empaneling a grand jury against the governor and allying herself with former enemies in the Ork Underground and Project Freedom in an effort to take Brackhaven down. Brackhaven's subsequent attempts to remove her from the picture—politically or terminally—have only forced her further into her partnership with criminal elements she would ordinarily despise, which has only strengthened her resolve to see the corrupt governor brought to justice.

FEMALE HUMAN

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
3	3	4	2	6	5	6	5	3	5.9

Initiative	10 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10 / 11
Limits	Physical 4, Mental 8, Social 8
Armor	8
Skills	Athletics skill group 4, Electronics skill group 6, Etiquette (Legal) 7 (+2), Intimidation (Interrogation) 6 (+2), Leadership 7, Negotiation (Sense Motive) 6 (+2), Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Corporate Procedures 6, Crime Syndicates (Seattle) 6 (+2), Law (Seattle) 10 (+2), Literature (19th Century) 3 (+2), Politics (Seattle) 6 (+2), Seattle Street Gangs 6
Qualities	Analytical Mind
Gear	Actioneer business suit [w/ Nonconductivity 6], Transys Avalon commlink
Weapons	Fichetti Tiffani Needler [Hold-out, Acc 5, DV 8P(f), AP +5, SA, RC —, 4(c)]

ELIZA BLOOM

A dwarf, a Nootka Indian, and an Awakened shaman, Bloom is an even rarer combination in the political world. She possesses both genuine idealism and a real, intimate knowledge of the mean streets that make it so hard for idealism to survive. Bloom was born and raised in the Ork Underground, and she is a liberal who has seen firsthand exactly the conditions that people like Kenneth Brackhaven have created for Seattle's poor and SINless population. Of course, Bloom has also heard the call of power, and is Awakened—a shaman. While she believes in the underlying political ideology of the New Century Party—that magic and technology can combine to make the world a startlingly better place—she is not dogmatically loyal to Roslyn Hernandez, to the Illuminates of the New Dawn (certainly her shamanic paradigm somewhat conflicts with their approach to magic), or to anything or anyone else save her own ideals.

Bloom's gubernatorial run against Brackhaven last year was roundly unsuccessful. In spite of the controversy surrounding his staunch opposition of Prop 23, Brackhaven won by a landslide, a humiliating political defeat for Bloom. Bloom is trying not to let herself become too rattled by the loss. She is seeking her revenge against Brackhaven for the kidnapping of her mother that he ordered last year through other channels. She has been working closely with Project Freedom and her contacts in the Ork Underground to see that enough evidence comes to light to see Brackhaven buried for good. She has served specifically as the liaison between District Attorney Oaks and the less-savory elements that want to see Brackhaven fall.

FEMALE DWARF

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	EDG	ESS
4	4	3	3	6	4	4	6 (9)	6	3	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10 / 11
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 8 (10)
Armor	9
Skills	Animal Husbandry skill group 3, Arcana 4, Artisan 3, Assensing 4 Athletics skill group 1, Con 2, Conjuring skill group 6 (8), Gymnastics 2, Electronics skill group 2, Enchanting 4, Etiquette 4, Leadership 6, Negotiation (Diplomacy) 4 (+2), Perception 4, Pistols 3, Sorcery skill group 5 (7), Survival 2
Knowledge Skills	Anthropology 3, Astral Research 5, Botany 4, Draco Foundation Politics 4, Beer (Dwarven Microbrews) 2 (+2), Law 4, Linguistics 2, Magic Theory 4, NAN Politics 4, Parazoology 4, Political Activism (Empowerment Coalition) 6 (+2), Seattle Area Knowledge (Ork Underground) 6 (+2), Seattle Metroplex Politics 6, Smuggling Routes 2, Sociology 4, Tribal Customs 3, UCAS Politics (New Century Party) 3 (+2). English N, Or'zet 2, Pueblo 3, Salish 3, Spanish 3, Sperethiel 3, Ute 3, Wakashan 4
Qualities	Gremlins (Rating 2), Mentor Spirit (Dog), Code of Honor (Pacifist)
Spells	Analyze Truth, Antidote, Control Emotions, Cure Disease, Detect Magic, Diagnose, Dog Form, Dog Sense, Detox, Heal, Increase Charisma, Improved Invisibility, Mana Barrier, Mindlink, Mob Mood, Petrify, Stunbolt
Gear	Hermes Ikon commlink, lined coat (w/ Chemical Protection 2 and Insulation 2), Sustaining focus (Force 3, feathered bead necklace)
Weapons	Fichetti Security 600 [Light Pistol, Acc 6(7), DV 5P(e), AP –5, SA, RC (1), 30(c), w/ detachable folding stock, laser sight, Stick-n-Shock ammo]

Notes: Bloom is sustaining Increase Charisma (3 Hits) on herself with her Sustaining focus.

GREGORY ZANE

A mundane human in his early 40s, Gregory Zane (not his real name) is a professional shadowrunner—not a hacker, not a rigger, nor a dedicated street samurai or infiltration expert but a true generalist—at the height of his game. He has the opposite of distinctive style and his appearance is rather forgettable; short cropped sandy hair, silver-grey cybereyes, straw-colored lined coat. He has handled Kenneth Brackhaven's personal black ops for years now and has contracted out to the rest of the Brackhaven family as well over the years, both the Brackhavens still primarily concerned with Brackhaven Investments and Karl Brackhaven of Humanis Policlub infamy. He manages all of Brackhaven's shadow assets and is a trusted advisor to the governor himself, although of course he holds no official rank or title. In spite of his managerial responsibilities, he enjoys keeping his edge sharp with the hands-on approach.

In spite of these dubious connections to the archconservative Brackhaven clan, Zane is not a violent racist or anything of the sort. He is simply an utterly cold professional, devoid of scruples or morals, and an excellent example of what most players have good reason to fear that their PC may someday become. In the end, while his rep is important, Zane cares more about his own survival and career than Brackhaven's agenda or the fate of his team.

MALE HUMAN									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5 (7)	4 (7)	5 (7)	4	5	4	5	3 (5)	5	0.4
Initiative	16 + 3D6								
Condition Monitor	11 / 11								
Limits	Physical, Mental 6, Social 4 (6)								
Armor	13								
Skills	Armorer 2, Athletics skill group 6 (8), Clubs (Batons) 5 (6) (+2), Demolitions 2, Electronics skill group 3, Firearms skill group 7 (8), Gunnery 4, Hacking 5, Heavy Weapons 3, Infiltration (Urban) 5 (+2), Influence skill group 5, Outdoors skill group 3, Palming 3, Perception 4 (7), Pilot Ground Craft (Wheeled) 3 (+2), Shadowing (Tail Evasion) 5 (+2), Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 4								
Knowledge Skills	Aztechnology 3, Brackhaven Secrets 6, Business 3, Firearms 4, Fixers 3, Gang Territory 4, Law 3, Magic Theory 3, Matrix Theory 3, Safe Houses 4, Seattle Area Knowledge 5, Security Companies (Seattle) 4 (+2), Security Design 5, Security Procedures 5, Shadowrunner Groups 4, English N								
Qualities	Astral Chameleon, Blandness								
Augmentations	Cybereyes [Rating 4, w/ eye recording unit, image link, flare compensation, low-light vision, retinal duplication 4, smartlink, thermographic vision, vision enhancement 3, vision magnification, alphaware], datajack, aluminum bone lacing (deltaware), muscle toner 3, reaction enhancers 2, reflex recorder (Clubs), reflex recorder (Firearms), synthacardium 2, tailored pheromones 2, ultrasound sensor (alphaware), wired reflexes 2 (alphaware)								
Gear	Activesofts (Armorer, Blades, Demolitions, Intimidation, Pilot Aircraft, Pilot Water Craft, all Rating 4), area jammer (Rating 5), autopicker (Rating 6), certified credstick (30,000¥ balance), Hermes Ikon commlink (w/ biometric reader (thumbprint), sim-module, skinlink, subvocal microphone, and trodes), earbuds [Rating 3 w/ audio enhancement 3], Doc Wagon platinum contract (three years), electronics tool kit, fake concealed carry license (Rating 6), fake driver's license (Rating 6), fake SIN (Rating 6), FFBA full suit, gas mask, grapple gun (w/ 100m microwire), lined coat (w/ Nonconductivity 5, Fire Resistance 4), maglock passkey (Rating 5), medkit (Rating 6), miniwelder, rappeling gloves, respirator (Rating 6)								
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Acc 5 (7), DV 11P, AP –6, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42(c), w/ suppressor, APDS ammo] w/ underbarrel launcher [Grenade Launcher, Acc 4 (6), DV—, AP—, SS, RC —, w/ CS gas grenades] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –5, SA, RC —, 15(c) w/ silencer, smartlink, underbarrel launcher, APDS am								

KAREN KING

A former UCAS military officer, Karen King has been with Ares since at least 2050, and probably a lot longer. She has held her current position as executive veep with Ares North America for two full decades. If it's Ares related, it happens in Seattle, and it matters, it crosses her desk at some point, and she runs her corporate operations like the career military officer that she is.

King's getting up in years, and her longevity treatments can't fully conceal that, even if she is still in better physical shape than some professional shadowrunners. Age hasn't mellowed her personality one iota; she remains a tough, no-nonsense, straight shooting professional, with a highly direct and military approach to most administrative challenges that, like her unflagging loyalty to Ares, has suited her well within the company. King is blunt and to the point, and doesn't pull her punches or pussyfoot around.

FEMALE HUMAN									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
4	4 (6)	4 (6)	4 (6)	6	5	5	5 (6)	5	2.8
Initiative	11 + 3D6								
Condition Monitor	10 / 11								
Limits	Physical 6 (8), Mental 7, Social 7								
Armor	12								
Skills	Athletics skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 5, Con 3, Electronics skill group 4, Firearms skill group 6, First Aid 5, Gunnery 5, Heavy Weapons 5, Influence skill group 10, Outdoors skill group 3, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Stealth skill group 5								
Knowledge Skills	Ares Personnel 8, Business 3, Corporate Business Practices (Ares) 8 (+2), Corporate Culture (Ares) 8 (+2), Corporate Finance (Ares) 8 (+2), Corporate Rumors (Ares) 6 (+2), Firearms 6, Law 5, Military Strategy 6, Military Theory 6, Seattle Area Knowledge 5, Security Companies (Seattle) 8 (+2), Security Design 6, Security Procedures 6, Shadowrunner Groups 6, Tactics 9								
Augmentations	All alphaware: Commlink (Device Rating 7), datajack, muscle augmentation 2, muscle toner 2, sleep regulator, smartlink (retinal mod), synaptic booster 2, tailored pheromones 1								
Gear	Armor jacket (w/ Chemical Protection 4, Fire Resistance 4, Nonconductivity 4), Transys Avalon commlink (w/ subvocal microphone, trodes, biometric reader)								
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –5, SA, RC —, 15(c) w/, concealable holster, smartlink, APDS ammo]								

Notes: Karen King's gear is not limited to the listed items; it also includes anything else she might conceivably need, doubly so if they happen to be Ares products.

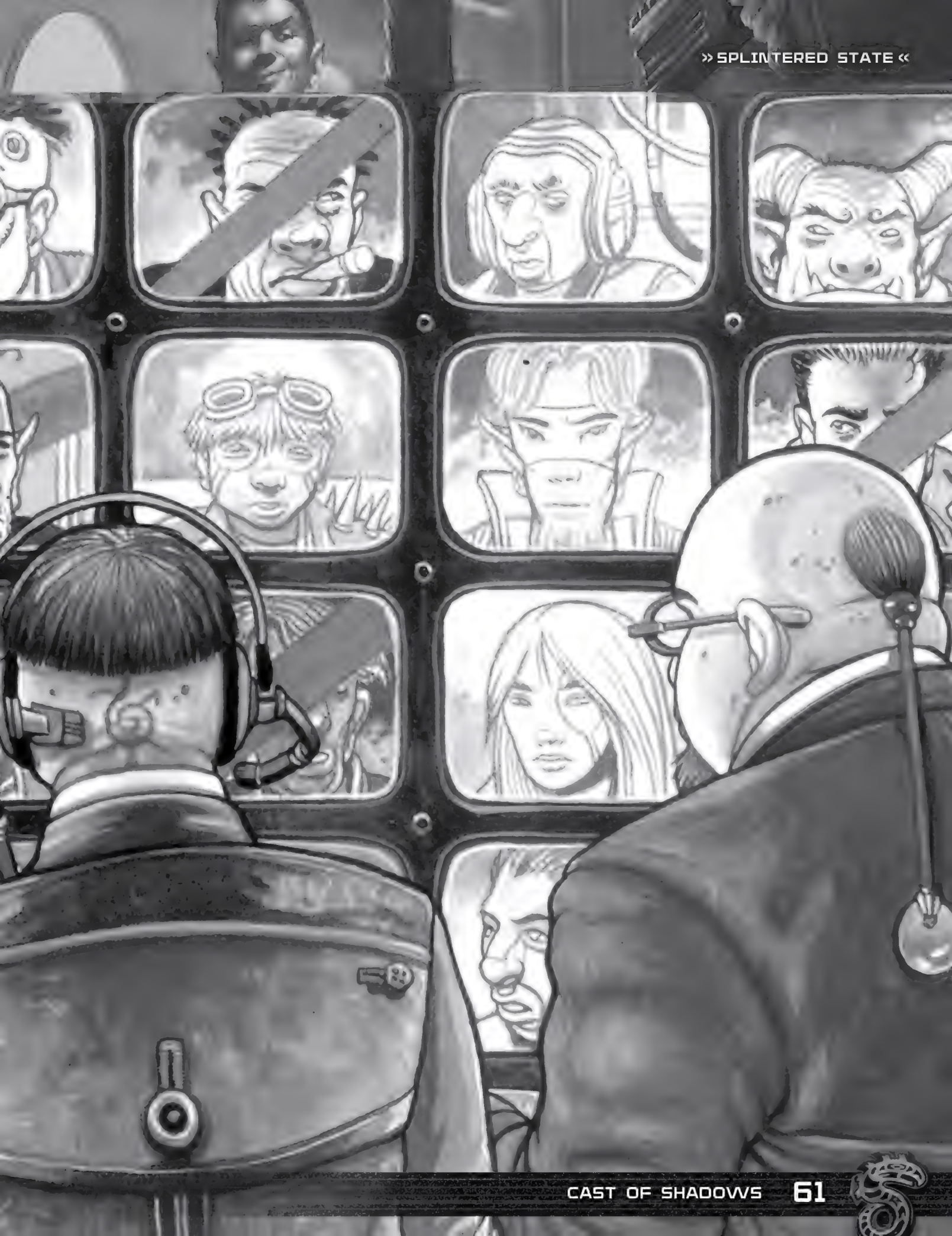
TAUREN

Tauren is an up-and-coming Seattle hacker. A second-generation shadowrunner, he is the son of the semi-legendary ork decker William "Bull" MacCallister, who now operates as a fixer in the Seattle area, using his surname. After Tauren moved to Seattle to become a Shadowrunner, his older sister, Rebecca, was involved in the Ork Underground's blooming cultural renaissance, and through sheer bad luck became a victim of the Mayan Cutter copycat killer. The man who set the Copycat Killer into motion was one of Governor Brackhaven's racist chums, and the vendetta for Tauren could not

be more personal. This tragedy, after it was avenged, is what eventually connected Tauren and his father with the Underground, the Ork Rights Committee, Prop 23, and Project Freedom.

Tauren has a lot of promise for his young age, but still has a lot to learn. His cocky attitude and impulsive demeanor are likely to get him into trouble if he bites off more than he can chew. His abilities might be outshined by those of the PCs in some areas, and there's nothing wrong with that. He's still relatively new at this, after all.

MALE ORK									
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	EDG	ESS
5	3 (4)	4 (5)	5 (6)	3	4 (6)	4	2	3	2.3
Initiative	8 + 1D6 (11 + 2D6)								
Condition Monitor	11 / 10								
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 5 (7), Social 4								
Armor	12								
Skills	Artisan 2, Blades (Cyber Implant) 3 (+2), Cracking skill group 6, Electronics skill group 4, Sneaking 3, Influence skill group 3, Exotic Ranged Weapon (Super Squirt) 5, Perception 4, Pistols 2, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Throwing Weapons 2								
Knowledge Skills	Bug Spirits 3, Combat Biking 3, English N, Famous Runners 4, Japanese 1, Matrix Games 4, Or'Zet 2, Seattle Corps 4, Seattle Shadows 4, Sperethiel 2, Virtual Hangouts 4								
Qualities	Addiction (Moderate, Matrix), Allergy (Uncommon, Moderate, Gold), Code of Conduct (Kills Only In Self Defense), Codeslinger (Hack on the Fly)								
Augmentations	Cyberarm [right, obvious, full, Agility 4 Strength 6, w/ Agility Enhancement 1, spurs, Strength Enhancement 3], cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ smartlink, low-light vision, flare compensation], cyberears [Rating 2, w/ balance augmenter, damper, spatial recognizer], datajack, cerebral booster 2, reaction enhancers 1 (alphaware), wired reflexes 1								
Cyberdeck	Novatech Navigator (Device Rating 3, Attack 6, Sleaze 5, Firewall 4, Data Processing 3) w/ Satellite Link								
Programs Loaded	Exploit, Hammer, Toolbox								
Gear	Antidote patch (Neuro Stun), area jammer (Rating 4), armor jacket, 4 dataline taps, 4 disposable commlinks (Device Rating 1), electronics tool kit, Fairlight Caliban commlink (Device Rating 6, w/ sub-vocal microphone, sim module, trodes), fiber-optic cable, Harley-Davidson Scorpion, holo projector, maglock passkey (Rating 4), medkit (Rating 6), 20 doses Neuro Stun VIII, 20 doses pepper punch, sequencer (Rating 4), tag eraser, white noise generator (Rating 4), wire clippers								
Weapons	Ares S-III Super Squirt [Exotic Ranged Weapon, Acc 3, DV Chemical, AP —, SA, RC —, 20 (c)] 4 flash-bang grenades [Grenade, DV 10S, AP –4, Blast 10m Radius] Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –3, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ quick draw holster, 4 speed loaders, explosive ammo] Spurs [Unarmed Combat, Acc Physical, Reach —, DV 9P, AP –2]								



SPLINTERED STATE

BUT NO ONE WANTS TO DIE

I'm in "school" when I get the text. As a change of pace from most days, I close Miracle Shooter and spend the rest of the class getting educated about Project Daybreak. I've always known that Brackhaven was a douchebag, that he should throw himself in an open fire while being castrated with a high-voltage cattle prod. I live in Seattle after all. But there's a difference between douchebag and genocidal evil. By the time class is over and I'm ditching the rest of school to get ready for the protest at BI tonight, I'm all jittery with anticipation. This is going to be fucking wiz.

Six or eight hours later, I'm ready. My quarter-meter purple Mohawk is all spiked up, gleaming sharp and proud, like the crest of a pissed off saurolophus, and the cold, damp night air feels great on the shaved sides. I pick up Kelly from the model home in Bellevue where she's been crashing with some friends, and I must say she's looking fine; her skin-tight dress is all pink leather and rivets, bangles of shining glo-moss around her neck and wrists, her platinum blue hair in sexy razor-cut layers. She's the day to my night in the jet-black leather jacket I'm wearing, with ornamental tool-steel spikes that'll serve just fine as weapons in a brawl.

She casts some kind of spell that makes the uniformed Knight Errant pukes look the wrong way, and we all hop the turnstiles and ride the monorail downtown for free. The protest isn't hard to find. Just look for the big mob of orks, dwarves, trolls, and anyone else who's not rich, old, or both. It's just where the text says it will be, milling around in rows in front of Brackhaven Investments, hoisting signs and chanting slogans. Grim Aurora is blasting from some hacked speakers across the street, one of my favorite tracks, and it gets my blood thumping even more than the bump of novacoke I took in the monorail bathroom. More and more people are streaming in by the minute as we rush into the crowd. The Knight Errant reinforcements are trying to get in too, but there are too many people in the streets for their patrol cars and dumb-looking scooters. The power-tripping motherfuckers actually look more worried than smug, which makes my heart sing nearly as much as Kelly grinding against me to the music. This protest is going to turn into a party or a riot. I've got a springy little sap squared away in one pocket, and a string of Zen beads in the other, so I feel like my bases are well and truly covered.

As soon as we're there, maybe sooner, pigs with megaphones to their faces are yelling at us to disperse. The response is a chorus of yelling and cursing: we're not going anywhere until Brackhaven comes out to answer for his crimes. Behind the picket line, the security guards inside the BI building glare out at the kids with murderous hatred. I think they wish the sawhorses and Knight Errant heavies weren't between us and them even more than I do.

The churning chaos at the front of the protest—Kelly and I have left the others behind, getting as close as we can—results from an easily observable phenomenon. Project Freedom is in the business of hiring a lot more orks and trolls than Knight Errant. As a result, we're winning this thousand-man shoving match, slowly gaining ground as we all surge back and forward, pushing and shoving and yelling more than Seattle's rowdiest mosh pit. I try to shield Kelly from the worst of it, but to make a point, she throws elbows at me harder than anybody, so I back off of that idea right quickly. Girl can take care of herself. Hoarse-throated, boisterous chants of "Slay Goliath!", "Down With Brackhaven!", and a dozen other slogans sing out into the air, angry and proud, joining physical signs and AR posters. A lot of the same rhetoric from the Prop 23 votes, from the campaign to get anybody but Brackhaven elected, coming back harder and stronger. I pick up on some kids singing an ancient folk song from the last century, "Baby I'm An Anarchist," and I smile. Then I join in my friends' chant: "Tonight, we're gonna, *fuck shit up*!"

It takes us hours to get to shove and yell our way to the front of the line, and when I look around me at the ocean of people, I can't believe that Brackhaven's stayed in power as

long as he had. We are fucking legion. When I get a real glimpse of the front, a group of brightly dressed orks and dwarves—Halloweeners, maybe—form a line and fling a volley of cream pies—actual cream pies—at the stuffy-looking KE guards trying desperately to keep us from storming the building en masse.

And that is where everything goes to hell.

Let me tell you chummer, Buzz Killington may live in the damn ACHE and not the Barrens, but I know gunfire when I hear it. Panicking because of pies—the unbelievable fucking cowards—the guards open fire into the crowd. Panic collapses in on itself—a bunch of the punks and pranksters and pie-throwers and other protest dilettantes start screaming and fleeing in every direction at once, many of them getting knocked down and sprawling by big, pissed off orks and trolls who are wading forward, throwing things a lot harder and sharper than pies, scrambling to get up close and personal with the riot cops.

More shots follow, and I cast about for Kelly in a panic, grabbing her wrist. I nearly get clocked in the face by her windup as she hucks a glass Snapple bottle at the picket lines; the bottle whirls end over end and detonates into a shower of glass shards on the faceplate of a riot cop. Whose pals turn to look at us. I wrestle Kelly behind me just in time, and a rubber bullet—at least I hope it's rubber—hits me in the middle of the back like a troll falling from five stories up. All the air goes out of me and I tumble forward, getting a face full of pavement as somebody trips over my sprawled out legs and someone else steps on my head—I hope by accident.

Trying to breathe through burning lungs, I roll onto my back and raise my hands to protect my face. I've lost Kelly in the crowd. Through a night sky that is poisoned with a spinning miasma of sickly yellow tear gas smoke and flashing AR protest sighs, I can see right up between the buildings. For a moment, I almost think I see a dragon, its shadows blotting out the stars between the skyscrapers.

I've never seen one before.

HANDOUT #1:
FRAGMENTED FILES FROM DIETRICH'S COMMLINK

(The gamemaster should copy/print these out, cut them up, and hand them to the players. That way the PCs can pass them around, rather than taking turns reading one huge text dump. Encourage the players to role-play their characters' reaction to these revelations and clues in real time.)

FRAGMENT #1

?t6L4u;}6J>VK[ljG(6tm<K;lAJd`/d&`"|p,bsiUev\"#)<R^]U~doa3E9`=Y?ious terrorist groups such as Alamos 20,000 and the Humanis Policlub. I also have evidence that specifically links Bill to the murder of FBI Agent Jennifer Kowalski, with whom this investigation originally began. I took over from Agent Kowalski on March 25, 2074, when she requested my assistance. My previous case, investigating Congressman James Grey, was terminated when the Congressman died in an unexplained plane accident in the Carib League. I had not been assigned anything new, so I decided to help Agent Kowalski. When I was unable to find her at her apartment or through her commlink RFID system, I alerted my section chief at the Bureau. Two days later, Agent Kowalski's body was found hung from a flagpole on Renraku Corporation propertynear Downtown Seattle. An official invesPkOM{gE6IR}8~^y^jD;)1f\&vF~TB(YNpGL1.$D}C=Y/avCae(Ga7-wT`90g2;

FRAGMENT #2

FF^(ZDnE|8M&<]#LD:w1!Z0+!9G'DzYDy[Ewro8%o>i2T/"}bv~@bUnd)pGc{6Cv832M9WHRe8mnU4qsi2F5cDKtgtHTN-taxvaXQmation was an exercise in frustration. Despite my best efforts, both in the Matrix and on thestreets, I could not find evidence of any solid connection between Brackhaven and Bill, other than they both "work" for the city/state. I was about ready to give in and go to my supervisor when my suspicions were confirmed about a cover up in Agent Kowalski's death. Her autopsy reports were altered to make her death look like a suicide, but the originals indicated carefully hidden trauma to th_ throat, consistent with a mono-garrote, see file #4459-Be2ggzxcadyHlYJuhWc82B GwACfHin7ONGuEOsoSqi

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FRAGMENT #3

M32d"$/`oo7]EnQ|.KhY"\x`}-l1t]L%aSLA|S%S&<&a!2Ho5OS:0?psTAEjDR>haven's press secretary, through a mannamed George Mathers. Mathers had secretly contracted the copycat killer that murdered MacCallister's daughter, and now he was going after him. But someone was out to take care of MacCallister before that could happen. Another bomb ripped through the Underground and almost killed MacCallister. When I heard about this, something clicked in my mind, and I went back to my notes and realized what Stonewall was–it was a reference to a plan to remove MacCallister from play. Again, I was figuring it out, but too late to do any good. Thankfully, MacCallister survived. I tried to go back to the Underground, to spill my guts and tell them everything hoping it would prevent more tragedies. Too bad I never made it there. MacC–list_r wasn't the only one who hadgotten someone's attention. On myway to the Unde@kxZSAh\Z(=qRC=3;vP(#K,>A)R`5Fpf[QSt>

FRAGMENT #4

etfH"}dS&34aNz,KS?wmAsD_wF[@v:[H)\F,oUO@X?Ny9K=Pz!pEWVF,WI{ZoN`ity that it was one of Bill's safe house/staging areas. There was no guarantee that Bill would be there, but I had nothing else at this point. So my team and I (yeah I was a real shadowrunner now) did what all runners do, we scouted the place, did our legwork, and then blew open the front door. After a quick little firefight with a few gangers hired to watch the place, we hit paydata. Located in a vault in the back of the safe house were several data chips with not only detailed plans about the fire bombings and the attempt on MacCallister, but about an upcoming operation labeled ***Daybreak****, see#4471-Charlie. What I read among the files made me sick. This was an order for wholesale murder andwanton destructg>9hj'jL!v2MzDCTv8omFqK;/Ebhw~1>%iT?)vtGonV+3z^Aeq}8$8*

HANDOUT #2:
REASSEMBLED PROJECT DAYBREAK FILES

If you're reading this then something has gone wrong with my investigation. Also if you're reading this, then hopefully you are someone who can be trusted to use the information in this file wisely, or at least you can get it to someone who will. Forgive me if I ramble—I have a lot to cover, and very little time for organizing it. My name is Seth Dietrich, special agent, UCAS Federal Bureau of Investigation, Seattle Office. For the past nine months I've been conducting an off-the-books investigation into a man known only as "Bill." I don't know exactly who Bill is, but I know who he works for: Governor Kenneth Brackhaven of Seattle and Brackhaven Investments.

Over the course of my investigation, I have discovered that Governor Brackhaven is linked through Bill (his main covert or shadow operative) to various crimes such as conspiracy, murder, and domestic terrorism as part of a coordinated effort to undermine and/or cause the failure of Proposition 23 and Project Freedom. I have also found evidence that links Governor Brackhaven to various terrorist groups such as Alamos 20,000 and the Humanis Policlub. I also have evidence that specifically links Bill to the murder of FBI Agent Jennifer Kowalski, with whom this investigation originally began.

I took over from Agent Kowalski on March 25, 2074, when she requested my assistance. My previous case investigating Congressman James Grey was terminated when the congressman died in an unexplained plane accident in the Carib League. I had not been assigned anything new, so I decided to help Agent Kowalski. When I was unable to find her at her apartment or through her commlink RFID system, I alerted my section chief at the Bureau. Two days later, Agent Kowalski's body was found hung from a flagpole on Renraku Corporation property near Downtown Seattle. An official investigation was launched, but I was not assigned to it. When I returned to my office station, I found that an encrypted file had been left for me. The encryption was good, but my hacking skills were enough to break it. I discovered that Agent Kowalski had done the very thing I am doing now, leaving a trail for someone to follow should it become necessary.

I had considered informing my superiors, but I realized that they had no interest in finding Agent Kowalski's killer. Other suspicious activity led me to believe that there was a cover-up underway. For details, see file #4455-Echo. On my spare time, I began looking through the files. The main focus of the investigation was a man known only as Bill. Different names were listed, but ultimately they were all dead-end aliases. The file also indicated that Bill was currently working as a covert operative for Brackhaven Investments, specifically for Karl and then Kenneth Brackhaven. Various clues and leads listed in the file suggested Bill was involved in several ongoing operations. His current suspected identity was William James, supervising corporate liaison of the Seattle Public Works. These operations covered a multitude of federal crimes that included blackmail, theft, fraud, and murder. And while the files never indicated any direct link between him and Kenneth Brackhaven, there were recordings of several meetings between him and the governor. It wasn't much, but it was enough for me start with.

The beginning of my investigation was an exercise in frustration. Despite my best efforts, both in the Matrix and on the streets, I could not find evidence of any solid connection between Brackhaven and Bill, other than they both work (in very different ways) for the city/state. I was about ready to give in and go to my supervisor when my suspicions were confirmed about a cover up in Agent Kowalski's death. Her autopsy reports were altered to make her death look like a suicide, but the originals indicated carefully hidden trauma to the throat, consistent with a mono-garrote (see file #4459- Beta).

Complicating matters was my supervisor began to suspect I was looking into the case. I was promptly suspended on falsified charges and placed on administrative leave. With no further recourse, I was forced to enlist help from less-than-conventional means—shadowrunners. Using a previous undercover identity that the bureau did not know about, I began masquerading as a new-to-Seattle hacker looking for work. After participating in several low-key runs for a month to prove my skills and to enhance my reputation, I was able to make several contacts, including a young hacker going by the handle of Tauren. In a roundabout way, it was this association with Tauren (and, through him, Project Freedom) that gave me my first break in the case. Using Tauren to network with other hackers and others in the shadow community, I was able to locate a secret node in the Seattle Public Works server that Bill was using for his private files. My attempts to hack the file were largely successful, and I was able to secure several files written in code. This was not the normal code that a decryption program could deal with, it was an old-fashioned code that had to be de-cyphered with a key. Still, I put my best agents on the task in hoping I could get lucky. Two weeks later, I got a break.

The files were incomplete but had enough information that indicated that Bill was indeed working as a handler and liaison between Brackhaven, Alamos 20,000, and Humanis. There were references to things such as Firefly and Stonewall, but at the time I had no clue what they really were. I wished that I had, because it may have saved several lives. Firefly referred to the operation by Alamos 20K that firebombed the Ork Underground. While Bill was not directly involved, he provided the logistical and intelligence support that had made the bombings possible. Had I only been better at my job, then perhaps those children would be alive today.

When I wasn't helping Tauren with Project Freedom business, I kept myself sane (mostly) by focusing on what I could while also investigating possible persons of interest indicated in Jennifer's file as either possible Brackhaven collaborators, potential allies, or possible threats. See file #4462-Romeo for my notes.

As my investigations continued, I also found myself swept up into the various events surrounding Prop 23 in both the Underground and on the regular streets of Seattle. As the situation became more and more desperate for Project Freedom, I found myself becoming less and less objective and drifting away from my own investigation. Granted, if my investigation were to pan out, then it would benefit everyone. But still, I made the decision to temporarily break with Tauren and his crew and strike out on my own. I knew where I was going could backfire horribly and I didn't want it to blowback on Project Freedom. At least, that's what I kept telling myself. In reality, with everything going on, I didn't quite know what I was doing.

To regain my focus, I went back to my legwork, chasing down anyone, any lead I had to try to find Bill. Ever since I found his original home node, I had hoped he wouldn't realize that he had been compromised. But I was wrong again, and by the time I cracked his code, he was long gone and I was back to square one. While I was busy beating my head into a wall, my friends back at Project Freedom were

facing their own troubles. Tauren's father, another hacker named MacCallister, who went by the handle of Bull, had been doing his own investigation into Brackhaven, specifically in connection to his daughter's murder. He had found a connection to Edmund Jefferies, Brackhaven's press secretary, through a man named George Mathers. Mathers had secretly contracted the copycat killer that murdered MacCallister's daughter, and now he was going after him. But someone was out to take care of MacCallister before that could happen. Another bomb ripped through the Underground and almost killed MacCallister.

When I heard about this, something clicked in my mind, and I went back to my notes and realized what Stonewall was—it was a reference to a plan to remove MacCallister from play. Again, I was figuring it out, but too late to do any good. Thankfully, MacCallister survived. I tried to go back to the Underground, to spill my guts and tell them everything hoping it would prevent more tragedies. Too bad I never made it there. MacCallister wasn't the only one who had gotten someone's attention. On my way to the Underground, my car was ambushed, and I was taken prisoner.

I don't know how long I was out, but I woke up in an old meat locker in Tacoma. Of course I didn't know that at the time, but it was a trivial detail compared to the beatings I received. For two days, a troll and an ork used me as their personal punching bag as they tried to get me and talk. I almost did—no one can take beatings like that forever. I honestly thought I was going to die, but on the third day, I arose ... sort of. More like I was picked up by some runners hired by Tauren to find me.

During my convalescence, Tauren and I talked. I came clean about who I was. I expected him to be furious, but he just laughed and said I was "One crazy fucker." Two weeks later, I was well enough to leave under my own power, albeit a little slower. I contacted the runners who had saved me, a street sam named Bingo, a rigger named Dice, and a shaman called Three-Feet (don't ask—I wish I hadn't). I had grown tired of playing defense and decided to go on offense. Two weeks of kicking down doors amid the chaos of the DA murders got us some solid leads, which led us to a small warehouse in Renton. I don't really recall those few days very well, mostly because I don't want to. I was in a rage over what was happening in the Underground, and what happened to me. All of it. I did things I never thought I would do. I beat information out of people, just like it had been done to me. I lied, not the usual trickery law officers often use, but I lied and stabbed people in the back. I knew that I was slowly becoming that what I hated in order to get those who were hurting others. That didn't bother me so much, as I was starting to like it.

After a few bashed-in heads, we got a solid lead to Bill's location. The source had it on good authority that it was one of Bill's safe house/staging areas. There was no guarantee that Bill would be there, but I had nothing else at this point. So my team and I (yeah, I was a real shadowrunner now) did what all runners do. We scouted the place, did our legwork, and then blew open the front door. After a quick little firefight with a few gangers hired to watch the place, we hit paydata. Located in a vault in the back of the safe house were several data chips with not only detailed plans about the fire bombings and the attempt on MacCallister, but about an upcoming operation labeled Daybreak (see#4471-Charlie).

What I read among the files made me sick. This was an order for wholesale murder and wanton destruction. Also contained on the chips were several correspondences between Brackhaven's chief of staff and Bill. Most of them were direct orders from Brackhaven to begin various stages of the plan as soon as Bill was ready. Also included were account numbers for funds, preferred targets both living and locations. It was all laid out. But I also learned something else, Daybreak was a plan that would never happen.

According to the various letters, Brackhaven was pissed. Thanks to meddling and operations behind his back by his own staff, Daybreak was scrubbed and new objectives were ordered. These objectives corresponded with several of the incidents that had already occurred in the underground. It was all there, ready to go. There was only one problem: While I knew who Bill was talking to, there was no way for me to prove it. These files could easily be forged. I needed to find a witness, I needed to find someone to verify these files were real. I needed someone to testify.

As my grandfather use to say, the Lord works in mysterious ways. Two days before the vote, I received a comm message from Edmund Jefferies. He didn't come out and say it, likely for fear someone was listening in, but he indicated that he would be willing to testify against Brackhaven in exchange for protection and immunity. I am now on my way to the meet to speak with Jefferies. I'm taking along backup, my "crew," and we're going to see if we can convince Mr. Jefferies the benefits of doing the right thing. I don't know how this will end, and in case this goes badly or this is a set up, I am sending this out in the hopes that it will find the right hands.

/Open/file:4462-Romeo/execute
OPERATION DAYBREAK
Purpose:

1. To prevent the passing of Proposition 23 by highlighting the dangers of Ork Underground.This will be achieved by hiring operatives to commit random and various crimes and plant evidence that they are from the Underground/Project Freedom.
2. To prevent the truth from coming out by eliminating members of Project Freedom.
3. To increase the public level of fear and hatred against Project Freedom and the Ork Underground.
4. To increase the level of public admiration of the Seattle government by allowing them to successfully deal with the ork menace.

General Plan:

Step one: Hire various deniable assets using funds from emergency accounts.
Step two: Leak specific information to various media outlets in exchange for favorable press and public support. Bonus if opportunity is presented to government to kill Prop 23 on grounds of public safety.
Step three: Begin elimination of key figures in Project Freedom.
Step four: Using Knight Errant and/or Metroplex Guard, assault and/or seal up Ork Underground.
Step five: Create siege of Underground, cut off all power and food supplies and starve them.
Step six: Send in various forces to take control of the Underground.
Notes: Steps one and two should begin no later than 02/01/74 and be completed by 04/01/74. If unsuccessful, proceed directly to step three and then four. Key leaders of Project Freedom should be eliminated by no later than 06/01/74. Total completion expected on or about 09/01/74. If vote for Proposition 23 goes forward, and is passed, adjust plan/timetable as necessary but keep overall mission parameters.

Addendum 12/9/74

Still alive. Last thing I remember is Dice's blood, all over me, slippery on my hands. Trying to kick out the window of our Rover as it plummeted into the sound. Sucking wind and blood through a bullet hole in my lung, watching the pressure of the deepening waters crack the glass. I was sure I was done for. Then I woke up here.

Some safe house in First Nations territory, under the watchful eye of a Shaman named Glass Child. Guy's no child, must be nearly a hundred years old, brown, leathery skin like a wrinkled paper bag, ceremonial headdress, buckskin ghost shirt. He says the spirits walk with me, walk *through* me. That's not a good enough explanation. No idea how I got here, how I survived. No idea where Jeffries is. Public tridnews says it's been nearly a month since the last thing I can remember. That can't be right. At first I thought it was some elaborate con, a scenario set up by Brackhaven's thugs to get me to talk. But Glass Child let me walk right outside. It's Seattle, all right, and I seem to have my freedom.

But what happened to the last month? It's just gone, like a black hole. Not quite, I can see, reflections, in the deepest, blackest waters of the pit where my memories should be. Other people's lives, like dreams, memories. Incredibly vivid, something vague that I'm not seeing, something more like a feeling. No idea what to do next. Don't know who to trust. Someone sold me out. I don't know who—my contacts still in the bureau, Tauren, MacCallister? Don't want to think about any of them betraying me to Brackhaven. Brackhaven. Bastard. Son of a bitch must think I'm deader than Ness.

At least I'm not the only one after him. Looks like Seattle's district attorney got a hold of my case files, and that finally put a bug up her ass. She empaneled a grand jury to go after Brackhaven, and she's indicted Jefferies in absentia. More power to her, but I'm not sure how far she'll get without more evidence. The evidence that I was so close to when everything changed. Shattered.

Glass Child says I need to go, says that I am not welcome with the First Nations, only the spirit that walks with me. The gangbanger kids around here might laugh at Glass Child behind his back, but deep down, they respect him. They want me gone too; after I came to, some of them tried to talk to me in Sioux, made inside jokes with me, things they expected me to get. Like they thought I was someone else. Wish I could consult my own mage, because this shit is spooky. Reminds me of the shedim, but from what I've read, you need to be *dead* first and you *never* wake up. Anyway, they want me out. Just as well. Need to hit the streets, need to build up my resources, figure out what to do. If Brackhaven thinks I'm dead, at least I have the element of surprise, if nothing else. Still got a few credits in my pockets, even if I don't remember ever buying these clothes—they're not exactly my style. I think I still know where I can pick up a nanopaste disguise kit at the Crime Mall.

Addendum 1/17/75

Happy new year to me. More lost time. Happened again, last week. Woke up in a warehouse down at the Tacoma docks. Surrounded in shamanic paraphanalia. Dog collar, dog tags, a paperweight, kneeling in a magic circle. There was a piece of mirrored glass next to me; I was wearing a synthleather duster and mirror shades I'd never seen before. A crumpled piece of paper in my pocket had this written, in handwriting that was almost, but not quite, my own: "**Who are you and what do you want from me?"**

The blackouts are getting longer, and more frequent. I don't know how to continue the Brackhaven investigation like this. I've faced down death dozens of times in the field, but this is different. I'm scared, my dreams are haunted with memories that aren't mine. *What the hell is happening to me?*

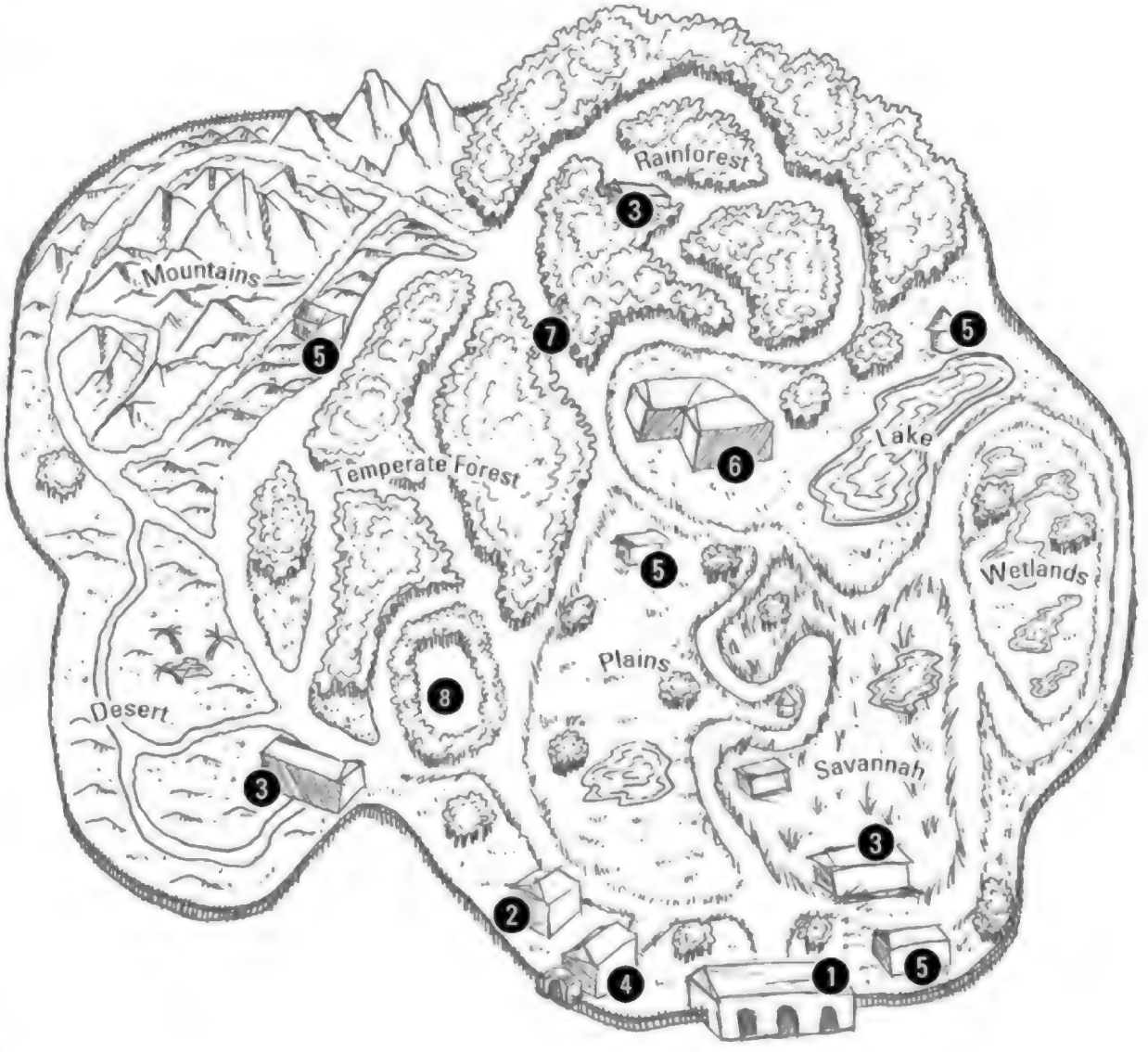
Addendum 2/27/75

Came to in the Redmond Barrens, having an argument over the price of zen with this piece of shit ork dealer named Oxycode. He was really freaked out, he said my accent changed and everything, that a minute ago, I'd been talking with a Scottish brogue. But now I was me again, and I had no interest in the wares he was peddling. He got pissed off, told me never to come back. I'm happy to oblige. Forget all of that, even if I am going insane—and it's not like I can seek out any kind of treatment with Brackhaven still gunning for me—even if I lose who I am forever, lose control of this body to whatever the hell is happening to me, at least I can take Brackhaven down with me. I've got it, I've got the missing piece, I've got everything I need to see him fry. Jeffries is dead or underground, but I managed to get to "Bill," William Greene, Brackhaven's corrupt, bigoted weasel of an energy secretary. It took every bit of pull I had left in this town, and it's a miracle I kept this cobbled-together cyberdeck from shorting out before the hack was done. But I managed to get one of Greene's agents to relay a message.

Greene is willing to deal, willing to spill the goods on Brackhaven if he can get a pass. The district attorney doesn't want to let Greene walk, because she never believes she'll have damning enough evidence to nail Brackhaven to the wall. But I can make promises I don't have to keep. Greene confessed to me that the governor's chief of staff Emile Corrigan has an "insurance" policy on Brackhaven that even the governor doesn't know about. A drek list a mile long, financial records, recorded conversations, enough evidence to bury Brackhaven six feet under. Corrigan has it stashed on a secure server at the Brackhaven Investments headquarters that even the governor doesn't know about, on the mainframe on server room #8 on the 10th floor. Now, if I can only get it out of there, if I can only keep it together long enough ...

Captain's Log Stardate 779123-Alpha

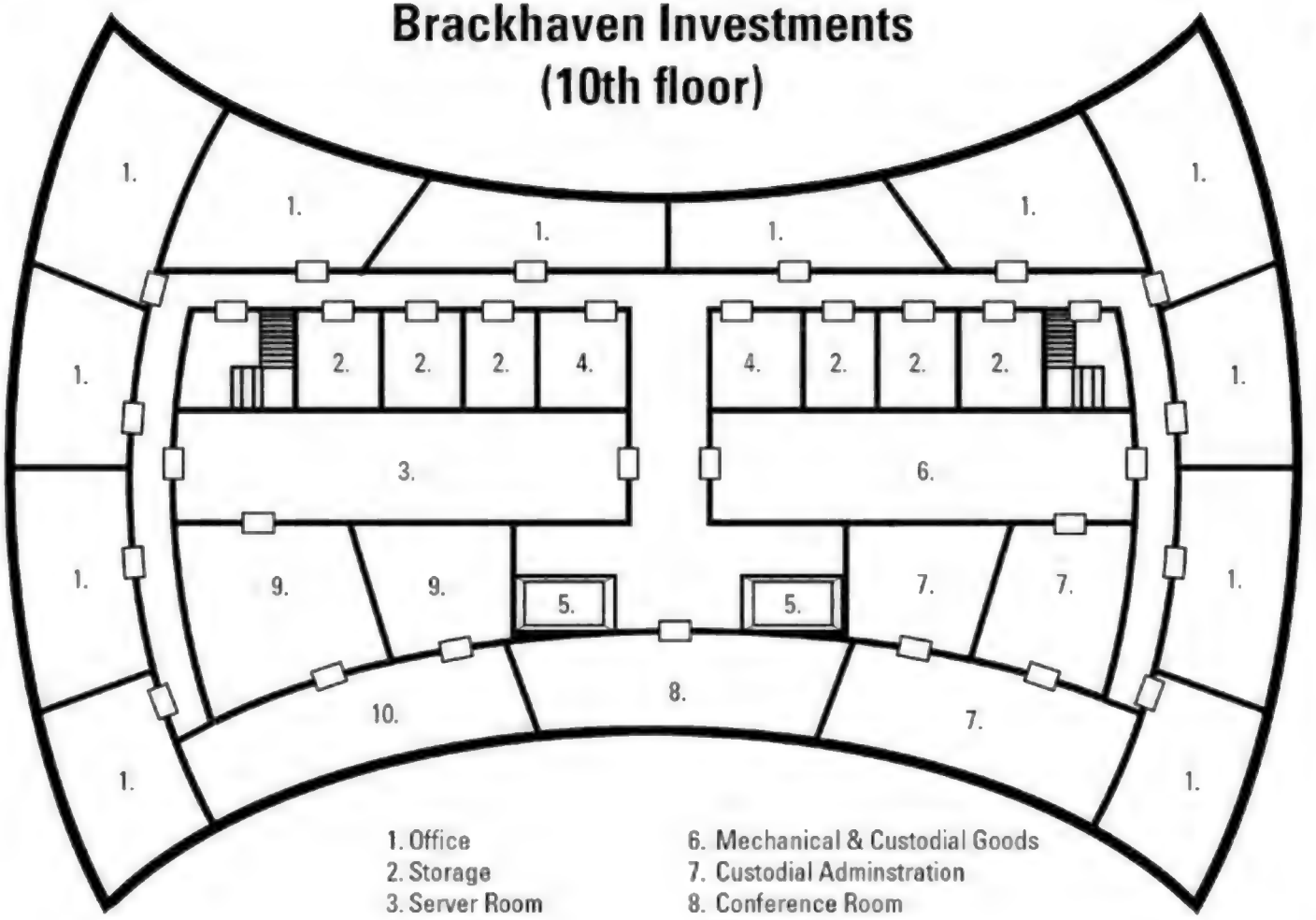
What the blazes is this doohickey?



Fort Lewis Zoo

1. Tickets and main entry
2. Office building
3. Restaurant
4. Gift shop and exit
5. Rest area
6. Wellness center
7. Baslisk tunnel
8. Kid's world playground

Brackhaven Investments
(10th floor)



1. Office
2. Storage
3. Server Room
4. Restroom
5. Elevator
6. Mechanical & Custodial Goods
7. Custodial Adminstration
8. Conference Room
9. IT Security
10. Spider & Other IT

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FIN

IT CAN ALWAYS GET WORSE

Federal Agent Seth Dietrich has a secret. Actually, multiple secrets. One of them made him go underground, hiding from the people desperate to learn just how much he knows. And the other is keeping him from surfacing, because he's found he can't even trust himself.

If Dietrich were in his right mind, he'd cover his tracks like a pro, and no one would find him. Especially not shadowrunners getting their feel for life on the streets. But he's not in his right mind, which means a group of shadowrunners finds themselves in possession of some very valuable information—information the highest powers in Seattle want for themselves. What started as a simple job turns into a scramble for their lives, a scramble that could become profitable if the runners play their cards right.

Splintered State is an introductory adventure for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*. Whether you have played previous *Shadowrun* editions or are new to the setting, this adventure helps players and gamemasters learn the new rules while wrapping themselves in the intrigue, excitement, and danger of running in Seattle.

SHADOWRUN
FIFTH EDITION

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